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ON THE COVER:

Leonard Bernstein and Dimitri Mitropoulos, who shared the honor of conducting the New York Philharmonic during its recent Latin-American tour.



Van Cliburn

PLAYS
THE

STEINWAY

X "I have been faithful ... in my fashion"

By PETER HUGH REED

I HAVE been asked to do a piece, as they say, about *The American Record Guide*, which I founded nearly a quarter of a century ago. To enumerate either the gratifications or the vicissitudes of this journey would take an issue in itself, but I will try to tell the story as briefly as I can and in terms that will be meaningful to the new generation of record collectors—or do they now prefer to be called "hi-fi" enthusiasts?

There are those who say that the pioneering spirit with which I sought to infuse these pages seemed to flag in the latter days of my tenure. The present Editor and Publisher, who succeeded me in the spring of 1957 after several years of close association, can tell a different tale. The frequent tomahawking tactics of the record companies (which are of course no concern of the reader and which good taste normally forbids mentioning) can be very wearying, as he has found out. So much for this. The illness that prompted my retirement is another matter.

Anyway, time catches up with all of us, and so it did with me. Having struggled to continue my publication uninterruptedly through two wars, two prolonged suspen-

sions of recording activity, and various other crises—especially those in which the chiefs of rival industry tribes either ignored the *ARG* altogether or tried to involve it in partisan warfare—I must say in retrospect that the ordeal would have been unendurable if I had not been blessed with a sense of humor and, I hope, a proper sense of duty to the reader.

Still it is futile to sacrifice one's health to such an enervating cause, even if possessed of do-or-die zeal as I must have been. Bucking the moguls of the trade in the interests of truth can be fun for a time, but it ceases to be with the realization that critics are subject to the same inexorable laws that shorten the productive lives of even the richest and most powerful overlords of the business world.

When one is a lone wolf in any field of endeavor, one is sooner or later apt to be taken for granted. So it was with myself. When I launched the *ARG* I had not stopped to consider the fate of the pioneer—and I use this term accurately, if perhaps immodestly, because it is a fact that the *ARG* was the very first publication in this country to give serious attention to recorded music. As recently as the

thirties, I should say for the edification of our younger readers, recordings were not considered worthy of review by any of the nation's outstanding music critics. For years after the *ARG* began its work this situation did not change appreciably. Only in the wake of World War II did music-in-reproduction finally fulfill its early promise of becoming a major cultural force.

And by then, more's the pity, the artistic aspects of recording had given ground to commercial considerations, so that potentially priceless souvenirs of great artistry became mere commodities. These days the record companies are not, as they should be, headquarters from which to serve the greatest of all the arts. They are only places of business, aware of their artistic responsibilities only distantly for the most part, and ever conscious that their survival in the hurly-burly of competition depends on their selling X-thousand copies of a given release within a few weeks after its announcement. Time was when a recording was planned with a view to the judgment of posterity.

To be sure, a recording *is* a commodity to the extent that the purchaser owns it and can do with it as he wishes. Disc or tape, it can be kicked around the house or thrown in a corner, and lent the dignity of an artistic creation only when the mood strikes and it is placed on the turntable or the tape deck. I do not subscribe to this treatment because a recording, in my opinion, deserves the same care as a fine book. Collectors in the old days felt the same way, or so it always seemed to me. Nowadays the general attitude is less careful, less respectful as it were. Perhaps the industry's change of perspective is somehow reflected in the more casual habits of today's typical listener. Only that which is treasurable will be treasured. Is it my imagination or do we have less, percentage-wise, on which to lavish such special care?

Of those who have read this periodical through the long years (and I am constantly amazed at the number whose subscriptions date from the very beginning), none would deny that it was perhaps best defined by one of my old friends as "some-

thing of an adventure in optimism".

Optimism was, and still is, the underlying philosophy of the *ARG*. Mind you, I do not mean optimism in the Pollyannaish sense. Far from it. I mean that the magazine from its inception aimed first and foremost—and still does—to serve the *reader*. Twenty-five years ago that was unique in music journalism. (Of today I would not speak, having long since given up trying to read all the magazines in the field.) While friendly at all times to advertisers I positively declined to print those adjective-ridden atrocities that press agents are forever grinding out and trying to peddle as "news". What an advertiser got, and all he should get, is the white space for his advertising. His product was mentioned editorially only in the review pages, or else merely brought to the attention of the reader without comment (as the new "Audio Visual" department will do), unless of course The Editor chose to remark on it in his own signed column.

I remember distinctly that this policy was mystifying to advertisers. For many years they had been accustomed to submitting "blurbs" with their advertising, fully expecting that it would be published as legitimate editorial matter. I can speak with authority on this because my own background, aside from my musical training, had included the editorial staffs of no less than three of the leading music magazines back in the twenties. I had also spent some time soliciting advertising for such magazines from artists. And let me tell you, what went on behind the scenes in those days—especially all the deals made between managers and publishers and editors of music magazines—was just nobody's business. The artists often dictated the notices they wanted to see in print, as well as the "angle" to be taken in feature articles about them (which were expected in frequency, length, and prominence of display commensurate with the amount of money paid—now let us be honest—for advertising). Those artists who were not able or not willing to buy advertising received either short notices, buried on a back page, or no notices at all.

—————(Continued on page 59)

Great music is mightier than politics

By MAX SERBIN

*Being a report on the
N.Y. Philharmonic's
recent tour by an ARG
reviewer who doubled as
violinist and diarist*



On tour it is not easy to find the solitude that one has to have for practicing. Bernstein succeeded briefly in Lima.

I WAS writing a review for *The American Record Guide* one cold day last March when the telephone rang. It was Joe De Angelis, personnel manager of the New York Philharmonic, and he wanted to know whether or not I could join the orchestra as a substitute violinist for the forthcoming South American tour.

Instrumentalists like to play under new conductors, and it just so happened that in my various tours of duty—with such assorted leaders as Monteux, Markevitch, Beecham, Scherman, Stokowski, Wallenstein, Dorati, and Leinsdorf only recently—I had never known the experience of working under Dimitri Mitropoulos or Leonard Bernstein. So I was at once interested.

Also, a trip through South America held promise of seeing what was left of the Inca empire, not to mention the opportunities to stock up on ithyphallic pottery, vicuña coats, semi-precious stones, and out-of-print chamber music. These are the sorts of things I can do without, to be sure, but they all figure in my private concept of gracious living.

And so, on the night of Sunday, April 27th, we said our good-byes to apprehensive wives, tearful sweethearts, and

massed in-laws, and took off for Panama and points south with the blessing of the President's Special International Program for Cultural Presentations, which is administered by the American National Theatre and Academy (better known by its initials, ANTA).

The following paragraphs are freely transcribed from my diary—specifically from the pages covering the period between Monday, April 28th, and Monday, June 16th.

PANAMA: This was our first concert, and our first mishap. Wardrobe trunks had been left outside the hall, which was not equipped to handle such a large orchestra. After a sudden tropical shower we were forced to change into damp formal under the open sky with amused Panamanians looking on. While we dressed, a truck carrying an Aerosol bomb passed slowly by, spraying us with insecticide. In the humid air of the hall we somehow got through the concert, but all of us had the feeling we had performed in a Turkish steam room.

Panama is a free port, so we hastened to shop around for German cameras, fancy liquors, and Chanel No. 5. This put a crimp in our finances at the very start of the tour.

VENEZUELA: Caracas was our introduction to South America—an introduction that promptly wrecked our conception of the continent. We did not see *los pobres* against stucco walls, asleep under large *sombreros*. We did not see a place where émigré North Americans could live on peanuts. What we saw was an architect's dream in a beautiful natural setting. The most daring ideas in modern design are freely expressed in houses,

office buildings, and public works. The University—especially the modern hall where we played, with its wonderful mobiles and acoustics—shook our northern egos a bit. Although we were staying in palatial quarters, we actually felt poor in Caracas. It cost me seven Yankee dollars to get my suit cleaned.

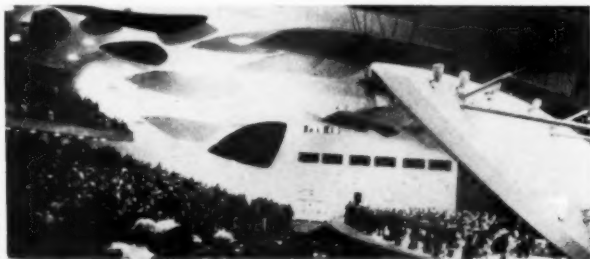
The Latin-American attitude toward music and the arts was another revelation to us. The first concert at the University was a triumph; the Venezuelans applauded, cheered, stamped, and yelled. Carnegie Hall was never like this!

"Good God," an amazed musician commented, as we rose for the twentieth time. "What do they do when they *don't* like you?" An acute question—to which we got an answer in the papers a week later. (Vice-President Nixon arrived in Venezuela shortly after we departed.)

Our first rehearsal in Caracas turned into a singular musical experience. We found ourselves reading through the national anthems of eight or nine South American countries. These are not at all like *The Star-Spangled Banner* or the *Marseillaise* or *God Save The King*. Rather, they consist of three or four aria-like stanzas with long instrumental interludes. We concluded the rehearsal with an agreeable feeling of having played a vaguely-remembered Verdi opera.

The last concert in Caracas was given atop a high hill in an open shell called the "*Concha Acustica*". Some ten thousand Venezuelans and a hundred New York musicians found themselves in a horrible traffic squeeze after the performance with nary a policeman to sort things out. "Policemen are very unpopular with us because they are still

Most of Venezuela saw and heard this concert. It was televised from the "Aula Magna" at the University of Caracas.





Thirty thousand strong turned out for this free concert in the "Valley of the People"—a park in downtown Sao Paulo.

identified with the recent dictatorship", an English-speaking citizen explained. "The older men are in exile or on trial, and a new force hasn't been trained yet, so you won't see many policemen around." We played the next evening at the oil-lake city of Maracaibo. After Caracas the damp heat of Maracaibo was trying and we were all jealous of one fellow-musician not scheduled to play that concert who swam quietly (and maddeningly) in the pool beside our platform.

COLOMBIA: We arrived in Bogotá the day after a political disturbance which had left hundreds of soldiers on the city streets with mounted machine guns, bayonets, and such. We hesitated to explore the picturesque old city because the soldiers seemed to be as curious about us as the rest of the citizens. Ordinarily, we would not have minded their staring. But those machine guns. . .

In this restless atmosphere we gave two concerts. The programs included Tchaikovsky's Fourth, Mendelssohn's "Italian", and symphonies by Copland, Harris, and William Schuman. Latin audiences are conservative, musically, and found our own contemporary composers hard to take. But there was no doubt as to their liking for the orchestra and for Leonard Bernstein, who was conducting the first half of the tour. "Lennie" captured one open rehearsal audience with a word: when the orchestra made an error, he was heard to exclaim, "*Caramba!*" Everybody knows about the Bernstein personality—the composer, conductor, pianist, and television star. But he is also a regular guy with a fine sense of humor and a receptive mind. His predilection for modern American music is evident and he

positively radiates with dramatic intensity on the podium. His versatility makes one think of the musicians of an earlier time, adept in many phases of art.

ECUADOR: Guayaquil gave us an unfortunate impression because the garbage collectors were on strike. In a lowland tropical city this can be especially deadly. The guidebook told us that "the orchids float downstream on the river", not mentioning that in that river all the orchids are well guarded by piranha.

We were glad to get back to the mountains for our next stop—Quito. Although it was the second capital of the Inca empire it is Spanish in style. It has barefoot Indians, ancient churches, and a wealth of Indian art.

Many of our audiences never had heard their national anthems played by a "foreign" orchestra; many never had heard *our* national anthem played by *any* live group. Musicians tend to be a cynical bunch, mostly interested in "making a buck", but I think we caught a little of the divine spark when we played for these people. Then, and only then, did we begin to appreciate the purpose of the whole tour—to spread good will for our country and let the Latins see us as we really are. Sometimes. Just as we think of them in an unreal stereotype, they have an equally unflattering one for us—the crude materialist interested solely in cocktails and the almighty dollar. Perhaps our tour helped to dispel a little of this notion of theirs. It certainly did a great deal for our notions about them.

PERU: At the Lima airport Bernstein hopped on a motor scooter and rode off across the airfield, playing tag with the

(Continued on page 61)

By JOHN W. BARKER

The fullness of perfection

FEW WORDS can conjure up as vivid and as varied a mental picture as does "Renaissance". The period this describes was alive with activity and excitement, full of significant events and colorful personalities which have fascinated everyone from scholars to those who read historical novels. This was the era of the north Italian city states, with their riches and their culture, their tyrants and their violence; of Florence and the great Medici family with its most eminent patron of the arts, Lorenzo the Magnificent (1449-1492); of Milan and the Sforzas.

But for Italy, too, this was the age of renewed foreign invasions, with the

French coming in successively under Charles VIII (1483-1498), Louis XII (1498-1515), and finally Francis I (1515-1547), who won his spurs at Marignano (1515) only to have them tarnished at Pavia (1525)—and in 1527 Rome was sacked by troops of his rival, Charles V.

This was the age of the "Renaissance Papacy", in which the pontiffs were concerned least of all with matters spiritual. Some Popes were patrons of the arts: there were Pius II (1458-1464), who had been the celebrated humanist Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini; Nicholas V (1447-1455), founder of the Vatican Library; Sixtus IV (1471-1484), builder of the Sistine Chapel; and Leo X (1513-1522), whose anxiety to build St. Peter's led him to the program of Indulgence sales that provoked Luther's revolt. And there were the Papal territorial interests in Italy: Alexander VI (1493-1503) and his illegitimate children, the ruthless Cesare Borgia and the much-maligned Lucrezia; and the most militant of the papal diplomats and statesmen, Julius II (1503-1513). Yet the age was hardly without its piety and even mysticism, with Thomas à Kempis (c.1380-1471), author of the *Imitation of Christ*, and with occasional outbreaks of religious frenzy like that whipped up in Florence by the fanatic monk Savonarola (1452-1498). And this was also the age of the Inquisition, at its grimmest in Spain under Tomás de Torquemada (1420-1498).

The atmosphere of high-pressure, secularized questing for power, wealth, and culture pervaded the bulk of Europe. The age of absolutism was dawning, and the great dynasties were building up behind themselves the resources of their territorial states. England under the

This is the fourth in a series of five annotated discographies in which Mr. Barker is tracing the evolution of music from the earliest centuries. The author is on the history faculty at Rutgers University.



Players on the oliphant, fife, drum, and trumpet—from
"The Feast of Herodias" by Israel van Meckenem

Tudors passed from Henry VII (1485-1509) to the celebrated Henry VIII (1509-1547), and the first fruits of the latter's labors were to be enjoyed under his daughter Elizabeth I (1558-1603). France was reaching a new peak of international importance under the Valois house, most notably Francis I. Even Spain was now emerging: the two main kingdoms of Aragon and Castile were joined at last in the union of Ferdinand (1479-1515) and Isabella (1474-1504); the Moors lost their last stronghold in the busy year of 1492, and the realm was to enjoy union and strength as it passed under the Hapsburg house with Charles (V) I (1516-1556). After the stagnation of the early Austrian Hapsburgs even the German Empire, prospering from the incredibly opportune marriage alliances (though not the escapades) engineered by the chivalrous Maximilian (1493-1519), seemed close to renewed energy and

prominence under his grandson Charles V (1519-1556). Already the latter was Charles I of Spain through his mother Joanna "the Mad", the daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, and hence ruler of much of Italy too. Now he was lord of the Austrian lands, also of the Burgundian Low Countries, and suzerain of the Germanies. But not even this dedicated man could shoulder such diverse responsibilities in an age when the idea of Empire was an anachronism amid national states: in 1555-6 he abdicated his thrones and retired to a Spanish monastery to synchronize clocks, rehearse his own funeral, and die in 1558, while his vast realms were divided between two branches of his house. Meanwhile, all Christendom trembled at the thought of the Sultan of the Ottoman Turks, Suleiman the Magnificent (1520-1566) whose power extended from the corsair lairs of the North African coast to the very gates of Vienna.

But in the broader sense this period was also the time of the Protestant Reformation: of Martin Luther (1483-1546) nailing up the Ninety-Five Theses at Wittenburg (1517) and standing before the Diet of Worms (1521); of John Calvin (1509-1564) in Geneva. This was also the time of the Catholic Counter-Reformation: of Ignatius Loyola (1491-1556) and the Society of Jesus; of the Council of Trent, which sat at intervals in 1545-7, 1551-2, and 1562-3 reforming the Roman Church from top to bottom; of tough Popes like Paul III (1534-1550), Paul IV (1555-1559), and Sixtus V (1585-1590), as well as the calendar-reformer Gregory XIII (1572-1585). This was the

age of intensified religious feelings only unsteadily held in check by the "Religious Peace of Augsburg" of 1555; secular affairs tended to become equated with partisanship of faith; while the prologue was given for the religious struggles of the next century in the bloodshed over the Anabaptists in Germany, and the Huguenots in France as well as in the revolt of the Lowlands against Philip II of Spain (1556-1598), who himself sent the famous Armada against England in 1588.

Thus this period, roughly the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, finds Europe bustling with lively, creative, and violent activity: the Middle Ages are clearly over, and the modern era has gotten under way. Columbus made his famous voyage in 1492, opening to Spain the fabulous wealth of the New World, while Portugal fixed the doom of Mediterranean trade by opening the all-water route to India around Africa with the 1497-9 voyage of Vasco da Gama. This was the age of the great banking families, like the Italian Medici, who eventually turned to politics and culture, and the German Fuggers, who were content to make money in fantastic amounts.

In Italy, where the Renaissance spirit first developed as far back as the fourteenth century, two of its main characteristics emerged: humanism, with its interest in man and his works, manifested in a new interest in the writings of Classical Antiquity and a passionate desire to learn Greek; and individualism, with its quest for developing all aspects of the personality to perfect the "universal Man" as sketched by a writer like Baldasare Castiglione (1478-1529).^{*} The time fairly teems with personalities who exemplify aspects of these two outlooks: Francesco Petrarca (Petrarch, 1304-1374), the Italian poet and lover of the Classics; Giovanni Boccaccio (1313-1375), poet and author of the *Decameron*; François Villon (1431-c.1465), French vagabond poet; Marsilio Ficino (1433-1494)

leader of the Florentine Platonists; Philippe de Commynes (c.1447-c.1511) the astute diplomat, admirer of Louis XI of France, and author of penetrating memoirs; Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527), historian, bureaucrat, and cynically realistic formulator of the principles of modern statesmanship and power politics; Johann Reuchlin (1455-1522), the great German humanist and Hebraic scholar; Desiderius Erasmus (1466-1536), the greatest of the Northern humanists, learned, gentle, humane, bitterly satirical and critical of abuses in the Church though personally staunchly devout; Sir Thomas More (1478-1535), the English humanist and author of *Utopia*; François Rabelais, who wrote masterpieces of rollicking, earthy humor; Philip Melancthon (1497-1560) the German humanist and colleague of Luther. The graphic arts were reaching new peaks of glory with the sculptor Donatello (1377-1446), with Flemish masters like Jan van Eyck (c.1385-1440) and later Peter Brueghel (1525-1569), the Mantuan Mantegna (1413-1506) the great Florentines Masaccio (1401-1429), and Botticelli (1444-1510), and then the epic colossi Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519), Michelangelo (1475-1564), Raphael (1483-1520) and Cellini (1500-1571), and the Venetians Gentile Bellini (1429-1507), Titian (1477-1576), Tintoretto (1512-1594), and Veronese (1532-1588); while in the North there were Dürer (1471-1528) and Holbein (1497-1543), to name but the most outstanding.

With such an array of dazzling brilliance to its credit, it has been easy to build up the old stereotype of the Renaissance as the period of "rebirth" of culture, learning, art, and refinement after the credulity, superstition, narrowness and "Gothic" barbarity of the Middle Ages. Yet the most superficial examination of the subject will demonstrate that the culture of the late Middle Ages compares more than favorably with that of the Renaissance, and in some fields far surpasses it. By the same token, the halo of progress and brilliance does not fall equally on all aspects of Renaissance culture. Indeed, one of the most striking features of the

^{*}For collateral reading I strongly recommend Castiglione's *Courtier* by John S. White, just published in New York by Philosophical Library.
—Ed.

Renaissance spirit, humanism, was very often a handicap rather than an aid. In literature this was distinctly so: here the Classical past was so ever-present in the minds of writers that their works generally became mere exercises in imitation of Classical style and form, with originality virtually stifled; there are only a handful of really memorable literary works of the Renaissance, and little to compare with some of the great works of the Middle Ages. In architecture, too, while less stifling than in literature the Classical influence was not entirely a healthy one, and there was no style evolved to match the noble achievements of the mature Gothic, although Brunelleschi (1401-1429), Bramante (1444-1514), and Michelangelo himself were no mean talents in their own ways. In sculpture and especially painting the humanistic influence was enough to be stimulating without being stifling; here, moreover, seemed to cluster men of such stunning ability that they could not help but be original and great, regardless of influences, and thus they contributed to the Renaissance some of its finest achievements. In general, however, it should be realized that the contrast between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance is hardly the black and white affair it is usually (glibly) assumed to be. Scholars

lately have been stressing the continuity between medieval and Renaissance culture: certainly in painting, with so little of Classical painting surviving then to be an influence, this is undeniable; with music the continuity is even more striking.

Unfortunately, of all the major arts historians most generally ignore (or are ignorant of) music. Literature, of course, always provides necessary source material. The graphic arts, painting and sculpture, and also architecture, leave works and monuments that can also be of great historical value. But somehow music, perhaps as the least tangible of the arts, has been generally ignored by hasty or tone-deaf historians. This is a pity, not only because music can give a wonderful picture of some of the highest esthetic and spiritual aspirations of a culture, but also because in this case music can provide one of the best arguing points for the idea of continuity between the Middle Ages and Renaissance. In fact, the only argument against it can be the claim that Renaissance culture is a purely Italian creation—a risky argument indeed. For, in truth, it was only in the latter stages of Renaissance music that the Italians made their contributions, in distinct contrast to the bulk of Renais-

(Continued on page 86)

Guillaume Dufay

Johannes Regis

Jacques Arcadelt

Philippe de Monte

Philippe de Monte

Roland de Lassus

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina

Thomas de Victoria

Marc'Antonio Ingegneri

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Thomas Tomkins

SIGNATURES OF RENAISSANCE COMPOSERS

Guillaume Dufay
Johannes Regis
Jacques Arcadelt
Philippe de Monte

Roland de Lassus
Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina
Thomas de Victoria
Marc'Antonio Ingegneri

Claudio Merulo
Gregor Aichinger
Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck
Christopher Tye
Thomas Tomkins

How Bruno Walter remembers Mahler

BRUNO WALTER'S little book on his beloved master, which now reappears in a new form, was described in its original preface by the author as a subjective appreciation—not a biography, but "a reproduction of the picture of Mahler that I carry within me". It is divided into two parts, called "Recollection" and "Reflection". The former, covering about seventy pages, is the ostensibly more biographical part, yet Dr. Walter conscientiously reminds us, in that earlier preface:

... I do not find within myself an account of the great transitions of his life from childhood to death, nor of the great wealth of his experiences, nor am I even able to bring home to my mind the development of the man between the age of thirty-four, when I first met him, until he had reached the fifties. . . Only the one man appears of whom it deals, and no mention is made even of the beloved wife who so strongly influenced him, nor of the loyal sister who shared his life up to the time of his marriage, nor of the noble friends to whom he was attached to the day of his death. . . My exclusive theme is: What I experienced with Mahler and how I see him.

As a matter of fact Mahler's ill-fated brother Otto does make an appearance in Walter's narrative, along with a few others. But on the whole it is, as he says, "a reproduction of a picture", and a most unforgettable one. From their vividly depicted first conversation in Hamburg in 1894, of which he writes "I should hardly have been surprised if, after we had taken leave, he had flown off in the form of a vulture", to Mahler's death-bed greet-

ing to an elegant French barber, "Farewell, O scraper of beards!", we are in the actual presence of a unique being who might have been created in the fantastic brain of E. T. A. Hoffmann himself.

The part called "Reflection" is divided into four chapters—"The Opera Director", "The Conductor", "The Composer", and "The Personality"—and gives a well-rounded picture of one of the most astonishing creative intellects of recent times. No attempt at exhaustiveness is made here either, though with respect to the final chapter not even Alma Mahler has given so thorough a general view of the unexpected areas into which his mind so keenly probed. There is obviously much more still to be written about this most unorthodox genius, but Walter's writing is a constant reminder of the true stature of the subject. It should be noted that Walter's autobiography (translated by James Galston as *Theme and Variations*, Knopf, 1946) is, in its voluminous discussion of Mahler, complementary to the present book, for each one adds, by cross-reference, considerable detail to the points of discussion of the other.

The forty-four pages devoted to Mahler's compositions, without thematic quotation, are of course purely descriptive rather than analytic, and for the present

GUSTAV MAHLER, by Bruno Walter
(a new translation "supervised" by
Lotte Walter Lindt). 176 pages. Alfred
A. Knopf, New York; \$3.50.



Mahler, left, with the young Bruno Walter (Prague, 1908; the man in the background is Ossip Gabrilowitsch)

the interested reader in English will have to eke out the latter information from whatever diverse sources he may chance upon. But how Dr. Walter, as one of the most highly regarded interpreters of Mahler's symphonies, views them is of some importance to the general public, and it is especially in this regard that I should like to consider the quality of translation by which his book reaches us.

This small volume has had, as a matter of fact, an unusually long and varied career in the author's recently adopted country. It was first published in Austria in 1936, on the twenty-fifth anniversary of Mahler's death. The following year it appeared in England, in a translation by James Galston under the imprint of Kegan Paul, and in 1941 this translation was published in the U.S.A. by the Greystone Press, with an additional hundred-page "biographical essay" by Ernst Křenek and an added index. About a year and a half ago, it was announced by Alfred A. Knopf that Dr. Walter had long been dissatisfied with Galston's translation of his work, and that consequently it was about to be published in a new English version requested by the author. After a considerable delay, this has now appeared, with a new preface and a new but con-

A Book Review

By JACK DIETHER

siderably less ambitious index, and somewhat ambiguously described on the title page as a "translation from the German supervised by Lotte Walter Lindt", and on the jacket simply as "a new translation". The story behind this is undoubtedly complicated, and is the concern of Messrs. Knopf and Walter. It suffices to say here that the second translator has now chosen to remain anonymous, and that it is this anonymous translation that has been "supervised" (i.e. edited) by Dr. Walter's daughter.

What is of more concern to reviewer and reader is (a) what was wrong with Galston's translation, and (b) whether the new one, as published, is an improvement. For convenience I shall refer to the former as G (for Galston) and the latter as X (for anonymous). By going back to the German original, it is not hard to find mistakes in G, notably with respect to certain musical terms which simply suggest that Galston is not a musician. But when G and X are both compared to the original, it becomes apparent that Walter, with or without Mrs. Lindt's help, has simply removed himself from the frying pan into the fire. In several respects quite inferior, translation X lacks some of the humor and a good deal of the atmosphere of G, but above all is addicted to *précis*-writing, in this case a sort of super-efficient reducing of everything to relatively basic English, often without subtlety or overtones. It is true that G's constructions are occasionally cumbersome, but he refuses to sacrifice Walter's full meaning for the sake of "convenient" paraphrase.

It is, however, understandable that Walter as a musician should be more dis-

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turbed by gross errors in the translation of musical terms, especially as they affect his discussion of Mahler's symphonies, and of these there is no lack in G. For example, his apparent inability to comprehend the basic term "*Durchführung*" leads him to render it variously as "realm of modulation" (page 89, Greystone edition), "ductus of the voices" (p. 103), whatever that may be, or simply "that part of the composition" (p. 113), where in each case Walter was referring specifically to the development section of a movement. The last-named error on page 113 has even more serious consequences, for it sets the reader searching in the wrong place for what Walter is describing. The discussion concerns the first movement of the Third Symphony, and the passage in question reads as follows in G:

And, as a matter of fact, there were quite a number of other strange subtitles, of which one, *Was mir das Felsgebirg erzählt*, has been mentioned by me before. Furthermore, he called *Das Gesindel* that part of the composition which, with cellos and contrabasses, ushers in a grotesque episode. *Südsturm*, he called the wild passages of the strings towards the end of the composition. (p. 113)

X renders the same passage quite correctly, though with singular lack of grace:

Some of the subsidiary titles are yet stranger. On one—*Was mir das Felsgebirg erzählt*—I have already touched; others are—*Das Gesindel* (The Mob), where, in the development section, cellos and basses open a grotesque episode; and *Südsturm* (Southern Storm), with wild string passages near its close. (p. 129)

Anyone wishing to locate the *Südsturm* might have to read X more than once to realize that he meant "near the close of the development section" ("*gegen Schluss der Durchführung*", as Walter writes, repeating the last word for clarity). But he wouldn't, like the reader of G, go looking for it at "the end of the composition", i.e. the end of the movement or even the whole symphony.

G's identification of "*Durchführung*" here with "composition" suggests that he thought it referred vaguely to the composing process as a whole, though on page 107 he correctly cites the "regular sonata

movement consisting of first part, development, reprise, and coda," and he gets it right in a couple of other places, so it is impossible to analyze his reasoning. However, the same confusion recurs on page 101 with regard to the Fourth Symphony: the "*Kleiner Appell*", Walter tells us, "*beendet... der Durchführung*", which G doggedly translates "at the end of the first movement". I wonder how many readers since 1937 have been searching in vain for the "Little Recall" at the end of the movement. Readers of the new edition will have the advantage that they will simply not know where to look for it, for X too (p.115) inexplicably goes wrong on *Durchführung* here, though he understands it everywhere else; his *Appell* doesn't "end the development", as it should, it "completes the picture"!

G's occasional identification of "*Schluss*" with "finale" where Walter means "coda" is another potential source of confusion which never gets quite out of hand (pp. 110, 115, etc.). Other expressions like "thematics" (p.90) and "melodies" (p.116) further suggest a laboring in a strange idiom. "*Genial*" (inspired, full of genius) is recurrently mistranslated as "ingenious" in reference to both Mahler and Berlioz, until at its fifth appearance (p.107) he finally gets it right. "*Beseelung*" means "animation", not "soulfulness" (p.80). Hrabanus Maurus' *Hymnus* in the Eighth Symphony is twice pluralized (pp.121-2), and on page 120 the self-translating "*unmetaphysisch*", in reference to the Sixth and Seventh, is rendered as its exact opposite.

Allusive but scarcely translatable words like "*Landsknechtsromantik*" (lore of the German hired foot-soldiers of the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries) and "*Nanie*" (a funeral poem sung in ancient Rome by a female relative of the deceased) are paraphrased by X, with his usual bare acceptability, as "folklore of the mercenaries" (p.104) and "elegiac vision" (p.122). G's correctly pedantic use of "the lansquenet romanticism" (p.90), and again of "lansquenet manners" (p. 92) for "*Landsknechtsart*", may be understood by those with an English dictionary at their elbows. But not even a large dictionary,

and only an occasional thesaurus, will help them with "nenia" (p. 107), an utterly obscure rendition of a word known to a few classical scholars in the plural as "*Nae-niae*". In such cases, the civilized expedient of a footnote is but common courtesy.

That is about the extent of G's real *faux pas*. Of mistakes large and small, I noted down thirty-four while checking it with the German text. Going through X in the same way, I noted 129, including a number of serious omissions. True, the major errors of actual translations in X are no more numerous, but the sheer readability and the accurate transcription of vivid phraseology of G are not there as compensation. As an example of what I have referred to as *précis*-writing, I ask whether anyone considers the passage "... *dass alles, was er dachte und sprach, von einem gewissen Erstaunen über den neuen Reiz des alten Lebens geheimnisvoll erfüllt schien*" sufficiently rendered by "... seeming to cast a secret shimmer over his speech and writing" (p. 69). G gives the same passage: "... that everything he thought or uttered was mysteriously permeated with a feeling of surprise at the new charm of the old life" (p.60), a beautiful depiction of the mood that gave birth to *Das Lied von der Erde*. Multiplying this sort of thing with examples on virtually every page suggests that if the intellectual contents of a book were measurable like the ingredients of a food preparation, the customers would be entitled to a refund.

The musical sections in X suggest a mind more at grips with the art of music, but not necessarily with Mahler's music. I have already mentioned that neither edition locates the Little Recall, though it is perfectly clear in the German text. In a reference to the *Andante* of the Fourth (p.118), the new edition substitutes "Fifth", an entirely avoidable misprint which should have been easily spotted either by Mrs. Lindt or a Knopf proof-reader, depending on when it occurred. The Fifth Symphony has, of course, no *Andante*, and Walter himself should have remembered in his original text that the slow movement of the Fourth is more

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properly described as a *Poco Adagio* with variations. The first movement of the Third, already dismembered by G, is further misrepresented by X as "panic-filled" on page 129, while on page 168 Walter's "*panisch*" is correctly identified as "Pan-like" only by virtue of the fact that the previous sentence quotes Mahler as saying: "No one seems to know the great Dionysus, the God Pan." How right he was; no one seems to know the Third Symphony either. In the earlier uncorrected passage where X goes wrong, G has simply a capitalized "Panic". This is technically correct, but again, one of the added explanatory footnotes that occasionally find their way into his version (to identify European names and locations) would have been more than welcome here.

Even that is not the end for this unfortunate symphony. "*Abblasen*" means "to sound a retreat" or just "to sound

off". However, "*der Militärsignal 'abblasen'*" is obviously carefully worded to refer specifically to the former (and the retreat can of course be clearly heard in the music), so it is quite wrong for X to paraphrase this laboriously as "'sounds off' in true military fashion" (p.114). Of the *Scherzo* of the Second, Walter says "*es ist aus einer Stimmung des Grauens geboren*" (it was born from a mood of horror). This (page 124) is not translated by X. Walter characterizes the basis of Mahler's slow movements as an "*ernstes Singen*" (solemn singing) similar to Bruckner's. This is rendered as "funeral song" (p. 113), which is far from the general case. At one point (p. 110) another self-translating word, "*Instrumentation*", somehow emerges as "interpretation".

When the reader without a working knowledge of German comes across an untranslated word like "*Bildungsroman*" in the text, as on page 147, he naturally assumes that the translator had some idealistic reason for leaving it in the unsullied original rather than attempting to translate it at all. So he remains uninformed, and is deceived as well, for the original gives "*Erziehungsroman*" instead. On page 136, X translates "*pathetisch*" as "heroic", and "*feierlich*" as both "fiery" and "solemn", as if he had corrected himself but forgotten to strike out his mistake. "*Stimmgewebe*" (texture of the parts, or "voices", as we say) obviously cannot be translated as "interweaving of vocal effects" where Walter is discussing Mahler's orchestral polyphony (p.119). Direct reversals of meaning also occur in the new version, as when "*nicht unbedeutender*" (not insignificant) is rendered as "small" (p.87).

In the recollective section of his book, Walter often qualifies the accuracy of his memory with an honest "I think" or "I believe". X frequently abbreviates even to the extent of omitting these phrases, falsifying the frankly subjective quality of the narrative. And as an example of the warm humor with which Walter's German is permeated, and which G recaptures with a verve not possible in X's

(Continued on page 85)

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Record Reviews

THERE IS IN SOULS a sympathy with sounds, and as the mind is pitched the ear is pleased with melting airs or martial, brisk or grave; some chord in unison with what we hear is touched within us, and the heart replies.

—William Cowper

John Sebastian Plays Bach: *Sonata No. 1 in B minor for flute and piano; Sonata No. 2 in E flat for flute and piano; Sonata in A minor for solo flute*; John Sebastian (harmonica); Paul Ulanowsky (piano). Columbia ML-5264, \$3.98.

▲PERHAPS much work and little music make most harmonica performers dull boys. This does not apply to the simply amazing artistry of John Sebastian. But why so much talk about works in his repertory (concertos by Villa-Lobos, Tcherepnin, Kleinsinger, a suite by Milhaud, etc.) and no recording of any? Granted the pickings are slim. Still, there are large-scale works by Malcolm Arnold, Gordon Jacob, Francis Chagrin, even a short piece by that prolific youngster (in spirit and energy) Vaughan Williams. The mouth organ (no prejudice in mind—I see no reason for the snobbery that demands the elimination of this cognomen) has its own musical allotment, though performers try their best to make it sound like every other instrument save itself. Why, then, play Bach? Well, to him that gives is given. Bach, if it must be, is better than some bush league composers. And Sebastian can play Bach—no doubts and no unmusical chicanery. In Sebastian's defense it must be said that quite often the violin has been substituted for the flute in the sonatas. In fact, while the tone color changes, the gain in equalized strength with the piano, replacing

the original harpsichord, is somewhat worth-while. Sebastian permits his instrument to sing Bach's long lines, and he does not imitate the woodwind family in an attempt to show off his miniscule instrument. If the absence of original music is disappointing at least the performances (including Ulanowsky's) are beautifully accomplished, and cleanly recorded.

—A.C.

•
BARBIERI: "*Los Diamantes de la Corona*"; Pilar Lorengar (Catalina); Maria Dolores Alite (Diana); Gines Torrano (Sandoval); Manuel Ausensi (Rebolledo); Gerardo Monreal (Campomayor); Rafael Campos (Don Sebastián); Coros Cantores de Madrid and Gran Orquesta Sinfonica conducted by Ataulfo Argenta. London A-4127, \$4.98.

▲THE zarzuelas of Francisco Asenjo Barbieri rank among the finest; they capture the true flavor of Spanish music and are at the same time distinguished by a refinement not always present in the theater of that country. The piece under consideration here was first produced in 1854. It has a rather involved plot peopled by bandits, nobles, and disguised royalty, and perhaps it should not be taken too seriously. Musically, however, it has grace and charm, and should prove one of the more appealing zarzuelas to the non-Spanish audience it may reach in this

recording. Happily, the performance under the late Maestro Argenta is one of his best, enlisting the services of an excellent cast. Pilar Lorengar is in top form; Ausensi, whom I have a number of times had occasion to admire, lends further distinction.

—P.L.M.

BEESON: *"Hello out there";* John Reardon, (baritone); Leyna Gabriele (soprano), Marvin Worden (tenor) and Columbia Chamber Orchestra conducted by Frederick Waldman. Columbia ML-5265, \$3.98.

▲THE composer, Jack Beeson, is a young American composer with a particular penchant for opera. He wrote *"Hello out there"* in 1953, when it was performed by the Columbia University Opera Workshop. It is a setting of a play by William Saroyan, according to the composer's program notes, "transposed, telescoped and extended." The story, which Saroyan tells us was based on real life, concerns a gambler in jail, a flirtation that becomes serious, and a lynching. It is a brief work and to the point. The vocal style is mostly a kind of lyrical recitative, with occasional cantilena. Behind the singing is a busy and colorful orchestra, offering commentary and carrying us forward swiftly with never a dull moment. The three singers do their parts well if perhaps a little self-consciously. The tanginess of Reardon's delivery is in keeping with the Texan locale of the story. The orchestra is excellent. Incidentally, workshop directors in search of contemporary material should know that Mills will publish this work shortly.

—P.L.M.

BEETHOVEN: *Piano Concerto No. 1 in C, Op. 15; Sonata No. 27 in E minor, Op. 90;* Solomon (piano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Herbert Menges (in the Concerto). Angel 35580, \$4.98 or \$3.98.

(Concerto No. 1)
Serkin, Ormandy..... Columbia ML-4914
Gieseking..... Columbia ML-4307

▲THE consistent level of distinctive artistry that Solomon has maintained through the years—his uncanny ability to penetrate to the core of any composition to which he addresses himself—is

again in evidence here. Devotion to the texts is the common denominator, and simplicity the dividend. Only a slightly warmer complexion of expressivity and a bit less dynamic restraint could improve on these compelling presentations. Menges does his work well. Angel's recording unduly favors the orchestra in the concerto, but the sound is quite clear. —A.K.

BEETHOVEN: *Piano Concerto No. 5 in E flat, Op. 73 ("Emperor");* Rudolf Firkusny (piano) with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg. Capitol PAO-8419, \$4.98.

Gilels, Ludwig..... Angel 35476
Serkin, Ormandy..... Columbia ML-4373
Curzon, Knappertsbusch..... London LL-1757

▲NEITHER Firkusny nor Steinberg provide the degree of organization or clarity of emphasis that make the astute classicism of Serkin (with Ormandy), the towering grandeur of Curzon (with Knappertsbusch), and the more intense drama of Gilels (with Ludwig) each in its own way outstanding among recorded versions of this masterpiece. It is difficult to ascertain whether the pallid piano tone in less declamatory portions and the stridency in stronger passages is a reproductive fault (along with an over-all dryness and an imbalance favoring the ensemble) or an artistic shortcoming.

—A.K.

BEETHOVEN: *String Trio in E flat, Op. 3;* Jascha Heifetz (violin), William Primrose (viola), Gregor Piatigorsky (cello). RCA Victor LM-2180, \$4.98.

▲THIS is Beethoven's initial work in the string trio category. Though the Op. 9 set contains the three great examples in this particular medium, the Op. 3 is typical and most representative of very early Beethoven. The length of the work (six movements) is proof that the cloak of the "divertimento" still hangs on Beethoven's composition. But artistically the true law of part writing is observed; Beethoven does not attempt to stretch his texture into quartet thickness. These virtuosi respect the true three-part concept of the composer, and also each other as performers. In fact,

the teamwork is at times incredible, so precise are the imitations, the agogic stresses and the like. The style, too, is correct. Despite some less-than-hi-fi sound, the recording is a bonus for any library.

—A.C.

BIZET: *"L'Arlésienne"* Suite No. 1; Suite from *"Carmen"*. Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Mario Rossi. Vanguard (demonstration record) SRV-107, \$1.98.

▲THE exuberant spirit and keen musicianship that Rossi exhibits make for lively listening. A good buy at any price; a bargain at this. Vanguard's sound specialists have put their best foot forward.

—A.K.

BLANCHARD: *Te Deum*; Edith Selig, Basia Retchinska (sopranos), Jeannine Collard (contralto), Michel Hamel, André Meurant (tenors), Camile Maurane (baritone), Anne-Marie Beckensteiner (harpsichord), Noëlle Pierront (organ), Chorus of la Radiodiffusion-Télévision Française, Jean-Marie Leclair Instrumental Ensemble conducted by Louis Frémaux. Westminster XWN-18692, \$4.98.

▲IN 1745 King Louis XV was trailing along with his army, theoretically under his command, but actually led by the great Marshall Saxe. The campaign was climaxed by one of the important battles of the War of the Austrian Succession, at Fontenoy. King Louis was fortunate enough to be with the victorious army. In celebration of all this when the King returned, as far as reliable evidence can indicate, the first performance was given of this *Te Deum* by a composer of the Royal Chapel, Joseph Antoine Esprit Blanchard (1696-1775). Herewith it is exhumed and offered once more by Westminster's French affiliate, Erato, who continue their fine policy of digging out these obscure and long forgotten works of *l'ancien régime*. Fortunately they make no attempt to pass it off as a work of genius. It certainly is not. But it is a work by a composer who had a fine sense of melodic line and a freer, more plastic choral style than one usually

finds in this literature. There are the expected moments of pomp and grandeur, but this composer apparently was more interested in elegant detail. Thus the soloists rather than the chorus dominate this work, and there are some attractive things in the music for them. Fortunately the soloists in this recording are all highly competent. (Old timers will recall Maurane—then a tenor—from the old Hewitt recording of the Rameau *"Les Indes galantes"* excerpts.) The instrumentalists and orchestra give excellent support. The chorus, however, is sometimes thin and weak, and the first two choruses might have come off better. The acoustics are big and atmospheric; fine, clear recording.

—J.W.B.

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Four more versions of the Brahms Third

By ALFRED KAINÉ

I WOULD not suppose that the Third Symphony of Brahms (nor any of the other three for that matter), whose substance is so lucidly and logically set down, and whose broader interpretative intents are so easily discernible, should prove so elusive to modern exponents. And yet it remains a fact that, after fifteen successive versions (including the four new ones under consideration), the greatest statement of this work is still that performance recorded in the 78 era (Jan. 2-4, 1945) by Serge Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony Orchestra. This was later transferred to LP, and only recently withdrawn. Let us pray that it turns up on Camden.

None of the present expositions of the F major Symphony can be called invalid. Comparative success, determined by structural organization, stylistic comprehension, penetrating understanding, and overall projection, belongs to Klemperer, Kubelik, Reiner, and Horenstein in that order. Before dealing with each discourse individually, one salient virtue and one weakness that all have in common bear citation. To dispense first with

the negative consideration—if the various gradations of *andante* offered in the third movement made for any improvement on the *poco allegretto* requested by the composer, the reluctance of these conductors to accept the written tempo might be understood. However, there seems little justification for the extreme lethargy preferred by each of these men, and their sacrificing the exhilarating lineal elevation inherent in a faster pace. To the credit of each is the finely felt expressivity and warmth that enhance all these readings.

Of the four, those of Klemperer and Kubelik bear the strongest similarity, each hewing to broad and decisive lines, while Reiner and Horenstein view the work in narrower, less declamative focus.

Klemperer offers the most majestic opening, and lends the most credence to the *frei und froh* (F-A-F) signature that sets the mood for the entire work. The versions on both Angel and London are painstakingly rich in relevant detail, but due to their over-deliberateness of momentum both delineations (particularly Kubelik's) become bogged down in this very detail and therefore lack the requisite

BRAHMS: *Symphony No. 3 in F, Op. 90; Tragic Overture, Op. 81;* Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. RCA Victor LM-2209, \$4.98.

BRAHMS: *Symphony No. 3 in F, Op. 90; Variations on a theme by Haydn, Op. 56a;* Symphony Orchestra of the Southwest German Radio, Baden-Baden, conducted by Jascha Horenstein. Vox PL-10,620 \$4.98.

BRAHMS: *Symphony No. 3 in F, Op. 90; Academic Festival Overture, Op. 80;* Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Otto Klemperer. Angel 35545, \$4.98 or \$3.98.

BRAHMS: *Symphony No. 3 in F, Op. 90;* Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Rafael Kubelik. London LL-3010, \$3.98.

Koussevitzky, Boston Sym...RCA Victor LM-1025

fluidity and spontaneity. In fairness, however, it must be noted that the Philharmonia evinces more interest in nuance and subtle shading, thus making up in part for dramatic shortcomings.

In the *andante* it is Kubelik who not only probes deeper, but also exhibits a more cohesive concept of the various thematic segments. But one could do without his inserted accent and phrase-breaking pause before bar 112.

Again in the final movement, the forces on the London label show commendable care in illuminating secondary voices, especially those in the bass registers of the strings and the woodwinds. However, as is readily audible in the over-heavy execution, Kubelik hardly honors the *allegro* (cut time) indicated—unlike Klemperer, who here supplies the needed spirit and animation as well as noteworthy stylistic awareness.

The Philharmonia fill-out is a very academic and not very festive reading of the *Academic Festival Overture*. Abetting Kubelik are the sumptuous tonal attributes of the Viennese and a superbly clear, realistic reproduction. While we know the Philharmonia to be an orchestra of equal merit, Angel's miking of it is slightly less effective.

The ordinarily meticulous Reiner's keen analytical and projective abilities are rarely in evidence here. Although beautifully played, his performance rarely

is above the level of a cursory run-through. Rhythmic and contrapuntal elements—usually a Reiner specialty—seem half-heartedly alluded to, tending merely to trace the music's surface outlines while the ponderous drudge of motion in the third movement, gives way to the equally illogical and frantically breathless tempo of the fourth. This notwithstanding, the *Tragic Overture* which completes the disc is accorded an interpretation of such masterful control and vibrant projection as to equal the best other version (Walter's) available. RCA Victor's recording is in sensitive adjustment.

While the opening movement in Horenstein's conscientious concept is well thought out, the now fast, now slow tempi and the inserted ritards deprive the second movement of unity. The plodding pace of the finale (as well as the aforementioned third movement) supplies weight and density only at the expense of continuity and climax. Both in the Op. 90 and the supplementary and amiably felt *Haydn Variations*, the overall coarseness and wiry string attacks, inelegant horns, and piercing woodwinds of this radio ensemble are a decidedly unfortunate factor in the end results when pitted against the tonal finesse that characterizes the work of the Viennese, the Chicago, and the Philharmonia. The veiled and thick-textured sonic values of Vox's reproduction are inverse to the interest of the performance.

In summary, the fact that a conductor might prefer to play a movement at a *moderato* rather than the written *allegretto*, or to eschew the indicated *piano* for a *mezzo-forte* or louder, is of only negligible importance, provided that he has brought something to the music of undeniable interest, verity, or logic without distorting the clear intent of the composer. This is interpretation, as distinct from vanity. But far more basic than slow or fast, and loud or soft, are such interpretative attributes as consummate insight and profound inspiration, and these are qualities which, in certain areas of the repertory, seem to be in scant supply nowadays.



Brahms conducting—one of a series by Willy von Beckerath

Callas

as

tigress



CHERUBINI: "*Medea*"; Maria Meneghini Callas (*Medea*); Mirto Picchi (*Jason*); Renata Scottò (*Glaucé*); Giuseppe Modesti (*Creon*); Miriam Pirazzini (*Neris*); Lidia Marimpietri (*First Maidservant*); Elvira Galassi (*Second Maidservant*); Alfredo Giacomotti (*Captain of the Guard*); La Scala Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Tullio Serafin. Mercury set OL 3-104, six sides, \$14.94.

▲UNTIL quite recently Cherubini's "*Medea*" (or more properly "*Medée*", for it was first performed in Paris) was one of the most famous of unknown operas. The lady who created the title role way back in 1797—Mme. Scio—was said to have contracted a fatal disease due to the effort it cost her. Singers who could cope with the part have never been too plentiful, and for many years the opera was remembered chiefly by its fine dramatic overture. Then all at once in our own time not one but two dramatic sopranos were found with the necessary physical stamina (for *Medea*'s difficulties are not a matter of pyrotechnics; the role demands practically continuous sustained singing in a not too comfortable *tessitura*, and its lines must be delivered in the grand manner). Maria Meneghini Callas assumed the part in 1953 at the May Festival in Florence; three years later Eileen Farrell created something of a sensation at a concert performance in New York.

Cherubini's life span, from 1760 to 1842, connects the periods of Gluck and Mozart with those of Berlioz, Meyerbeer, and the early Wagner, bridging over the careers of Beethoven, Weber, and Schubert. Musically he stands somewhere in the midst of all these men. Beethoven, as is well known, greatly revered the elder master, and there are traces of his admiration in "*Fidelio*". If "*Medea*" contains reminders of Gluck and Mozart they are transformed, perhaps by the grisly subject—one that would have delighted Richard Strauss. Actually, the score as we now know it is not all the work of Cherubini. As originally performed in Paris it was cast as an *opéra comique*; the recitatives now used were

provided by Franz Lachner for an 1854 production in Vienna. Cherubini himself made drastic cuts in his score after its first presentation; our modern editors have done some further pruning.

Essentially "*Medea*" is a one-woman opera, though the other principals have their moments. In this performance the supporting cast is adequate, if little more. Pirazzini brings a rich if not perfectly steady voice and a good sense of style to Neris' aria, and Picchi does about as well as any contemporary Italian tenor would with a part that demands heroic singing. Miss Scotto, who has the first scene for her own, is a little too tame even to serve as a striking contrast to the tigress portrayed by Callas. Modesti sings rather hoarsely as Creon. But once *Medea* makes her entrance nothing else matters. I cannot claim for the singer that she

rides over the difficulties with ease and abandon—some of the high-lying phrases are obviously taxing—but even this is unimportant. She is the one member of the cast who knows how to deliver her lines with the classic declamatory weight, and she is the vengeful woman to the life.

One can hardly help drawing a comparison with Miss Farrell, but this is really futile. What more Farrell could give in vocal opulence Callas makes up for in temperament and style. If she shares the show with any of her colleagues it is Serafin, who plays the score for all the excitement there is in it. He knows, too, how to mold a phrase. The offstage choral passages in the last act stand out as musical highlights; certainly some credit for this should be given to Harold Lawrence, who was musical supervisor of the wonderfully exciting recording. —P.L.M.

CHOPIN: *Nocturne No. 5 in F Sharp, Op. 15, No. 2; Ballade No. 3 in A Flat, Op. 47; Nocturne No. 18 in E, Op. 62, No. 2; Prélude No. 25 in C Sharp Minor, Op. 45; Nouvelle Étude No. 3 in D Flat; Impromptu No. 3 in G Flat, Op. 51; SCHUMANN:* *Novelette No. 1 in F, Op. 21, No. 1; Aufschwung, Op. 12, No. 2; BRAHMS:* *Intermezzo in E Flat Minor, Op. 118, No. 6; Rhapsody in B Minor, Op. 79, No. 1; DEBUSSY:* *Reflets dans l'eau; DEMUS:* *Introduction and Tarantella (1953).* Joerg Demus (piano). Westminster XWN-18723, \$4.98.

▲ **MISCELLANY** like this does not attract a recording company unless it is building an artist in whom it believes. Why, then, should we be interested in such a collection from Demus, who has been best known for his unevenness? In short order the answer is obvious—he is now hitting all the highs that made his Fauré album a "must" and none of the lows that occasionally have plagued his recitals. Technical assets being equal, he shows here the matrix of future greatness, a way with his material that transcends the curse of literality afflicting many of our big-name "youngsters". The quite variable stylistic delights of one of his

teachers, Yves Nat, are somewhat in evidence as usual, but so is Demus' sleight-of-hand touch—the Brahms Intermezzo is spun out of thin air! The artist's own composition reflects two large facets of himself—the relaxed and the wistful. Westminster's confidence in him is, I think, beginning to be justified. Sound is excellent. —J.B.L.

■
CHOPIN: *Ballades, Nos. 1 in G minor, Op. 23; 3 in F, Op. 38; 3 in A flat, Op. 47; 4 in F minor, Op. 52; Impromptus, Nos. 1 in A flat, Op. 29; 2 in F sharp, Op. 36; 3 in G flat, Op. 51; 4 in C sharp minor, Op. 66; Orazio Frugoni (piano).* Vox PL-10.490, \$4.98.

▲ **THE** "grand manner" of Chopin playing is wonderfully exemplified here—large-scale dynamics, crashing crescendi, with a strong, trumpet-like texture in the melody line. Such an approach is thrilling in, say, the Polonaises, but somehow the present program cries out for more wistful and tender shadings. These compositions are sentimental in the best sense of the word, so why be ashamed to show it? Have you ever heard the *F minor Ballade* performed with a lightness and delicacy of touch, making it an almost pastel fantasia? Horowitz recorded it that way years ago,

and it is an unforgettable experience. I don't mean to imply that Frugoni is unfeeling and harsh; he is a pianist of taste and temperament, and within the context of his "grand" approach he is flexible enough to communicate his ideas. There are technical slips, but not enough to make a listening hindrance. Vox's recording is as full-bodied as Frugoni's playing.

—D.H.M.

CHOPIN: *The Scherzi* (complete); Ruth Slenczynska (piano). Decca DL-9961, \$3.98.

Rubinstein.....Victor LM-1132
 ▲THERE are certain basic facts which most pianists who appear in public simply take for granted. Interpretations differ, but who would deny that the authentic score of a work is at least the basic framework of the intentions of the composer? Slenczynska's shortcomings as a pianist are not so much interpretative as they are lack of care, or awareness—or something—of the indications in the score. Her trills and turns, for instance, are slow and muddy, interrupting the flow of phrases. Rubato is carried to a distasteful extreme. Many of her dotted rhythms are not dotted at all—they are smoothed out until they become an even succession of notes all of the same rhythmic value. And when even rhythms are called for, she pushes and pulls until the music is twisted and distorted almost beyond recognition. One would think that Slenczynska could at least heed expert coaching and advice. Needless to say, the above-mentioned Rubinstein version is in a different class altogether, revealing artistic insight and integrity of the highest order. To mention the two artists in the same breath would be ridiculous.

—D.H.M.

CHOPIN: *Les Sylphides*; **MASSENET:** *Espada* (excerpts); *Ballet Music from "Le Cid"*; Orchestre de l'Opéra de Paris conducted by Georges Sebastian. Urania UR-8013, \$4.98.

(*Les Sylphides*)
 Fiedler, Boston Pops.....RCA Victor LM-1919
 ("Le Cid")
 Fiedler, Boston Pops.....RCA Victor LM-1084
 Irving, London Sym.....London LL-651

▲ASIDE from *Espada*, which has no recorded competition, neither the playing

nor the conducting nor the bad arrangements (*Sylphides*) nor the reproduction begins to challenge the best available, listed above. The only high esthetic note is struck by the outstandingly excellent program notes.

—A.K.

CHOPIN: *14 Waltzes*; Jean Doyen (piano). Epic LC-3468, \$3.98.

Lipatti.....Columbia ML-4522
 ▲HERE is fine, musical playing which stresses the poetic qualities of the Waltzes more than their more obvious virtuosic aspects. Doyen's approach makes much of the music, although it lacks that final degree of realization which made Lipatti's performances so memorable. The slightly aristocratic, moody, and at the same time brilliant, almost effervescent feeling that pervaded Lipatti's last studio recordings has a quality all its own that very few could emulate. This new Epic disc is nevertheless a good one, if not entirely in the same class. Excellent piano sound.

—I.K.

CLAFLIN: *Teen Scenes for String Orchestra*; **McBRIDE:** *Pumpkin Eater's Little Fugue*; *Workout for Small Orchestra*; **KAY:** *Round Dance and Polka for Strings*; Orchestra of the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, Rome, conducted by Alfredo Antonini (Clafin); New Symphony Orchestra of London conducted by Camarata (McBride and Kay). Composers Recording CRI-119, \$4.98.

▲AMERICAN music is concerned with more idioms and techniques than is typical in any other country. The American composer has inculcated all international styles, and made research in his own land. It is to be expected, therefore, that America would have classicists, romantics, colorists, neoclassicists, and all the rest. However, in the case of Clafin and Kay it is possible to trace the heritage and background and still not identify their music as American. On the other hand, a few measures of McBride and its national birthmarks stick out—nicely. This means that Clafin's seven-piece suite is music that clings to romantic forebears. He has reassimilated and is content. The music is semi-programmatic, has no fatty

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layers of lush romanticism, is muscular with healthy tone. Kay's little piece, like McBride's, is a reissue; both performances used to be on a London disc. Anyone interested in a rounded collection of American music will find Kay's work interesting, though the example recorded here is hardly sufficient. McBride is a healthy, extrovert composer. His music is athletic, but not nervous, not one whit concerned with intellect, but with a brand of ruddiness that makes immediate contact with the listener. It runs its course in the well-informed, but non-academic means of the jazz idiom—the *Workout* is a cocktail lounge idiom constructively translated in terms of a chamber orchestra. The performances are especially good in this recording, and so is the sound. CRI has scored another bull's eye. —A.C.

●
COUPERIN: *Mass for the Convents;*

TITELOUZE: *Four Versets on the Hymn "Ave Maris Stella".* André Marchal at the Organ of the Prytanée Militaire at La Flèche. Westminster-Erato XWN-18674, \$4.98.

▲**MARCHAL'S** feeling for these masters is famous, manifesting itself in matters of registrational variety and instinctive attack, and the organ of the Jesuit College at La Flèche, built in 1639 and recently restored and enlarged, provides a granitic historicity. The light monotony of the early harmonic idiom is kept from descending into the boredom we experience from hands less expert—for this is basic church music, simple and non-virtuosic, written to serve monks and nuns rather than amuse organists. Still, and with all due respect, the music fares better with M. Marchal. The sound of the instrument itself is thin and weightless despite its size, typical of the *idée fixe* the French have for voicing, be it pipes, tenors, or taxi horns. —J.B.L.

●
DOWLAND: *Come again, sweet love doth now invite; Thou mighty God; When David's life; When the poor cripple; Can she excuse my wrongs; Sempre Douland sempre dolens* (lute solo); *Flow not so fast ye fountains;*

I saw my lady weep; Weep you no more, sad fountains; Shall I sue; Flow, my tears; Lachrimae antiquae pavan (lute solo); *Far from triumphing court; Lady if you so spite me; In darkness let me dwell;* Russell Oberlin (counter-tenor) and Joseph Iadone (lute). Experiences Anonymes EA-0034, \$4.98.

▲**THE** lute songs of Dowland are among the glories of English music. In them we have a marriage of superb poetry and beautifully expressive melodies, and, perhaps most remarkably, an independence in the lute parts that has been compared to the achievements of Schubert a couple of centuries later. It would be hard to pick a favorite in such a collection as this, for each is a perfect thing in itself. Russell Oberlin brings his immaculate musicianship and clear, telling diction to bear upon all the songs. If the program as a whole has a weakness it is that some of the songs, done with all their verses, are rather long, and to suit the singer they are pitched high. This, incidentally, must add to the problems of the accomplished lutenist. Perhaps the songs should be savored individually, or a few at a time. —P.L.M.

●
ENESCO: *Rumanian Rhapsodies, Nos. 1 and 2, Op. 11; DVORÁK: Carnival Overture, Op. 92; TCHAIKOVSKY: Francesca da Rimini, Op. 32.* Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. Columbia ML-5242, \$3.98.

(Enesco)
Stokowski, NBC Orch.....RCA Victor LM-1878

▲**THE** somewhat diminishing acoustic returns in Philadelphia Orchestra recordings only heighten one's perplexity at Columbia's decision of some months ago to transfer recording sessions from the Academy of Music (in which the orchestra gives its concerts) to the ballroom of the Broadwood Hotel several blocks north. Increasingly over-produced sonics (stressing gloss rather than depth) and a lack of realistic balance have replaced the lustrous and cleanly focused sound. Perhaps more disturbing is the increasingly evident hand of the monitor. In this day of advanced technology, it does not seem unreasonable to expect

to hear the dynamics that the composer wrote—from the softest of pianissimi to the top of a long (or sudden) crescendo, rather than a sudden leveling-off somewhere short of the dynamic summit—particularly from an ensemble with so enormous an expressive vocabulary. Ormandy's special understanding of the Slavic idiom is nothing new. However, his mastery of nuance and subtleties, particularly in the Enesco, surpasses anything I have heard from him before in this literature. Tchaikovsky's *Francesca* lacks the optimum stress on brass in the opening and closing *allegro* sections (this may be a reproduction fault rather than Ormandy's. I have heard him perform this work with all the dramatic surge one could want.) My own preferences in the *moderato* are along broader lines, affording the contrapuntal and rhythmic elements their full say. The recording is altogether too wide and resonant for the requisite intimacy of the *andante cantabile*. Nevertheless, Ormandy's effort is equal to any of recent vintage. —A.K.

FALLA: *The Three-Cornered Hat*; Consuelo Rubio (mezzo-soprano); Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion Française conducted by Eduardo Toldra. Angel 35553, \$4.98 or \$3.98.

▲THIS is the ballet score of Falla's little masterpiece, not the suite as it is usually played. Which means, of course, that there is quite a bit of less familiar music here. It is music of great charm and wit. What is even better, it is a fine amalgam of rousing spirit and polished virtuosity. Toldra is to the manner born, and he extracts every ounce of Spanishness from the score. Miss Rubio sings in equally appropriate manner. —P.L.M.

FRANCK: *Sonata for Violin and Piano*;

DEBUSSY: *Sonata for Violin and Piano*; **RAVEL:** *Pièce en forme de habanera*; **FAURÉ:** *Berceuse*; David Nadien (violin); David Hancock (piano). Monitor MC-2017, \$4.98. ◀

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but he is too casual about translating the printed notes into sound. The quasi-glissando, the emotionalizing via sliding the finger on a violin string, does not enhance when the music is a combination of color change and contrasts of texture. Debussy withers on the vine when he is played with *echt*-Tchaikovsky tonal obesity, and the allure of Ravel's haunting piece is made less when the tone is over-stimulated rather than permitted to sound Ravel's own subtleness. The Franck is far too lush. With all the super-chromaticism of this beautiful piece any overcharged performance will make only confusion. Hancock's playing is better. Good studio sound. —A.C.

•
GERSHWIN: *An American in Paris; Porgy and Bess—Symphonic Picture* (Arr: Robert Russell Bennett); Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati; Mercury MG-50071, \$3.98.

(*An American in Paris*)

Gould Victor LM-2002
Abravanel Westminster XWN-18686

▲THE "American" was the second of Gershwin's concert works entirely orchestrated by himself. Contrary to what seems to be a widespread and misinformed belief, Gershwin did *not* leave the task of orchestrating his large works to others. It so happened that Ferde Grofé did this for the *Rhapsody in Blue*, which was turned out in a hurry (about two weeks) expressly for the Paul Whiteman orchestra, in which Grofé served as arranger and orchestrator. Even so, in his score written for two pianos, Gershwin suggested some of the instrumentation. From the Concerto in F (1925) on, and including the *Second Rhapsody*, the *Cuban Overture*, the "I Got Rhythm" Variations, and all of "Porgy and Bess", Gershwin did his own orchestrating. All of this may serve to allay the sometimes voiced opinion that, while Gershwin's compositions are fine and all that, "where would he have been without a clever orchestrator?" *An American in Paris* is a delightful work, and a good deal of the pleasure in hearing it may be attributed to Gershwin's handling of the instruments, particularly the strings in the now famous "walking"

themes. The piece has a particularly charming American-Parisian gaiety that is still holding up beautifully after three decades. In its purely formal aspect it may be a little loose-knit, but it is no less effective for that. Dorati and the Minneapolis men give us a vigorous account of the "American", though there may be an over-emphasis of the percussion—an affliction common enough in this period of infatuation with the sound of one's own sound, or high-fidelity-itis. But it's not too disturbing. For spirit I prefer the Gould version, and for the most faithful rendering of Gershwin's orchestration the Abravanel is in a class all its own. The Bennett "symphonic picture" is an acceptable re-working of the "Porgy" score, though the new arrangement by Morton Gould strikes me as being a better one—in addition to using more music (that is, he employs more actual Gershwin themes than did Bennett). Gould's "Porgy and Bess" Suite is available on the above-listed Victor. I should, however, like to hear Gershwin's own "Porgy and Bess" Suite, which was played around a bit in early 1936 and never heard again. In sum, the Minneapolis does its usual excellent job but others have done better.

—E.J.

▼
Note: Readers should know that soon after the sixtieth anniversary of Gershwin's birth—the 26th of this month—Doubleday is publishing *The Gershwin Years* by Edward Jablonski and Lawrence Stewart. The co-authors are, of course, the same E.J. and L.S. whose reviews appear regularly in these pages. —The Editor

■
GRANADOS: *Twelve Spanish Dances;* Eduardo del Pueyo (piano). Epic LC-3423, \$3.98.

Echaniiz Westminster 18433
Soriano Duc. 93101

▲PIANIST del Pueyo is evidently a polished artist and his playing reveals long and loving association with these little masterpieces. The freshness and spontaneity of his touch, and the rich variety of tonal colors which he can elicit, leave very little more to be wished for. It will be remembered that Soriano's recently deleted version emphasized an almost ethereal

grace which was charming. But the rich hues of del Pueyo's playing lend more authenticity and personality to this per-

formance. Especially well realized is the improvisatory No. 3. Epic's recording is splendid.
—D. H. M.

An enterprising new project

Once again, EA meets a pressing need

HANDEL: *Keyboard Music Vol. 1—Suite No. 3 in D minor; Suite No. 11 in D minor; Suite No. 13 in B flat; Vol. 11—Suite No. 8 in F minor; Suite No. 14 in G; Suite No. 15 in D minor; Paul Wolfe (harpsichord). Expériences Anonymes EA-0032 and EA-0033, \$4.98 each.*

▲IT is an almost shocking fact that the Handel Harpsichord Suites, which stand as some of the finest music composed for that instrument, are so neglected today. They are not often programmed in recital, and even in the field of recordings where "complete sets" are so much the trend it is amazing to see that the current LP catalogues list only one suite—No. 5 (the one that contains the so-called "Harmonious Blacksmith"). Several years ago there had been a partially complete recording by Frank Pelleg, but this had not been an ideal performance. During the thirties there was, of course, the Handel Harpsichord Suite Society in which Landowska

played five suites. Isolated suites have been recorded from time to time, but in general the situation has never been comparable to the state of recording which Bach's keyboard works have achieved. Expériences Anonymes are therefore to be congratulated for their enterprise in this new project. Their choice of a performer is excellent: Wolfe, a pupil of Landowska, brings to this wonderful music a real sense of dedication; he has a thorough command of his instrument and knowledge of his subject. This is difficult music to interpret, for no two editions agree as to correct ornamentation or even, for that matter, as to the notes themselves. The performer must work all this out for himself, in addition to which he must master the problems of tempi, dynamics, phrasing, and in general all the early eighteenth-century techniques of interpretation. Improvisation, too, is included, for in Handel's day the music on the printed page frequently represented but a skeletonized outline of what was to be played. On these two records (of a series which I hope will include all of Handel's works for keyboard) there are six suites, which make an excellent introduction to the literature. This is impressive music, bold and profound at times, light and charming at others, but always interesting; every suite has a different mood. For a sampler try the opening Prelude to the *No. 3 in D Minor*. Each record features excellent notes by Alec Robertson, as well as commentary on Handel and the suite form. The performances, on a large nine-foot harpsichord, are authoritative; all repeats are taken and registration is handled with not only intelligence but also considerable variety of tone. The recording is very good. Highly recommended. —I.K.

Wolfe: "a real sense of dedication"



HAYDN: *String Quartets, Op. 9* (No. 1 in C; No. 2 in E flat; No. 3 in G; No. 4 in D minor; No. 5 in B flat; No. 6 in A); Beaux-Arts String Quartet. Washington Records WR-450/2, \$4.98 each.

TO THE best of this reviewer's knowledge, the LP debut of the Beaux-Arts group marks also the initial recording of the Op. 9 set. There are some who argue that collating the complete works of a master composer is ill-advised activity because some of the music is bound to be unworthy. Well, all the juicy morsels in any feast are not to be found in the main course.

Tracing the growth of the magnificent Haydn quartets makes for an understanding of his genius. Before Haydn had completed a third of his quartet output, the first violin's prima donna tactics were subordinated. The melodic impulse was assigned to other voices, and harmonic counterpoint replaced homophonic dictation. The constant and pointed differences of form, the modulatory schemes, the carefully deployed instrumentation, all point to the goal Beethoven was to reach later.

The Op. 9 set is strongest in numbers three and four; the other pairs (especially the first) are lesser in total interest. But though the first violin wields the power he is not greedy. The more democratic method is already evident in the frugally scored minuet of the fourth quartet—three-voice writing for the pair of violins (an honest to goodness "trio"). In the fifth quartet the opening movement's second variation is assigned to the lower instruments alone. In the slow movements there are several instances where

Haydn left a place for a cadenza insertion. It is to the credit of this quartet that they understood the artifice of a twentieth-century cadenza in a Haydn work, regardless of its correctness in the eighteenth century. The sly wit of the final movements is Haydnesque. But Haydn's joke book never repeated any stale stories.

The Beaux-Arts team plays acceptably, but their quartet sound is not sufficiently blended. It needs seasoning. The inner voices are too obstinately restrained, whereas the cello has a heaviness that it would lose if the second violin and viola would give more response. In the fast movements their skills are pronounced and the music becomes correctly articulate. One makes these remarks with some hesitation, since this quartet alone has taken the time to study and make available the music at hand.

An important postscript: Irving Lowens (it is difficult to believe that he must be blamed) has an interesting "chronorama" as part of the liner copy for these three albums which contains some astounding boners. Schönberg is listed as having written three quartets. Four are acknowledged, but with the discovery of the actual first quartet (so-called "lost"), there are now five. Schubert is given by Lowens a total of three! Reger and Glazunov have been cheated of one quartet apiece, and Grieg's "unfinished" (two-movement opus) is just as correctly a quartet as is Schubert's B minor a symphony—thus his total should be two. Beethoven's quartet total is traditionally accepted to be seventeen; Lowens puts it at sixteen, perhaps considering the *Grosse Fuge* as still part of the Op. 130. —A.C.

HAYDN: *Concerto for Trumpet and Orchestra in E flat*; **VIVALDI:** *Concerto for Two Trumpets and Orchestra in C*; **CLARKE:** *Trumpet Voluntary in D*; **PURCELL:** *Trumpet Tune and Air in D*; *Voluntary for Two Trumpets in C*; *Sonata for Trumpet and Strings in D*; Roger Voisin and Armando Ghitalla (trumpets); Unicorn Concert Orchestra conducted by Harry Ellis Dickson. Unicorn UNLP-1054, \$3.98.

(Haydn) Haydn Society 9031
(Wobitsch) Vanguard 454
(Eskdale)

▲**VOISIN**, who is the featured artist on this interesting record, is the first trumpeter of the Boston Symphony. For the different works in this program he uses a variety of instruments from his own collection, and those intrigued by the trumpet would do well to investigate this disc. I must, however, insert a few words of warning to the prospective purchaser:

for all the interesting repertory (much of the Purcell, and in addition the famous Clarke *Voluntary* once thought to be by Purcell, is arranged for trumpet and was not originally written for that instrument) the playing and recording are not outstanding. This is less Voisin's fault, although he is responsible for a singularly bland interpretation of the Haydn Concerto, than it is due to the overcut record itself. The raucous trumpet sound is decidedly unpleasant to listen to, and the wishy-washy, ill-defined orchestral playing does little to provide the necessary support. The Haydn probably comes off worst, especially in comparison with the excellent Wobitsch performance. The conductor gives a routine interpretation in which Haydn's indications of dynamics are all too frequently overlooked. Voisin, too, seems to be merely playing the notes—very well, of course, but there is more to it than just that. And why does he omit the first movement cadenza? —I.K.

HAYDN: *String Quartets*: "The Lark", in D, Op. 64, No. 5; "Quinten", in D minor, Op. 76, No. 2; Hungarian Quartet. Angel Library Series 45018, \$3.98.

▲**REFLECTIONS** on listening to Haydn: wonder at—and at the same time absolute conviction in—the fact that he will remain a delight to the end of our days, come revolutions, twelve-tone rows, or ships to the moon. The two quartets paired here are among the most famous. The "Lark" is one of the twelve dedicated to Johann Tost, a professional violinist turned wholesale merchant; the first violin, as one might expect, runs away with the show, but no one will object. The "Quinten" boasts the famous first movement which Rosemary Hughes describes as "perhaps the most superb feat of concentrated musical thought in all Haydn's quartets". The Hungarian Quartet plays in a straightforward manner, not aggressively expressive, but not with pallor by any means. They "bite into" the strings in a way which records well and lends a feeling of strength to their performance. A very satisfactory session, and well recorded. —S.F.

September, 1958



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HINDEMITH: *Concert Music for Piano, Brass, and Two Harps, Op. 49* (1930); *Concerto for Orchestra, Op. 38*; *Cupid and Psyche*; Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Paul Hindemith. Decca DL-9969, \$3.98.

▲THIS recording is of special note, for it fills two major gaps in the recorded Hindemith repertory. The ballet overture, *Cupid and Psyche*, while not so richly developed a work as its two companions, is none the less of merit and also hitherto unrepresented in the LP catalogue. Hindemith knows exactly what he wants from his instrumentalists, and has all the ability to convey it. Whether in terms of

Hindemith: "a potent intellect"



LANGLAIS: *Missa Salve Regina*; Jean Langlais, Jean Dattas (organs), Brass Ensemble, Schola des Pères du St. Esprit du Grand Scolasticat de Chevilly conducted by Lucien Deiss, chorus of the congregation conducted by David Julien. **DUFAY:** *Missa sine nomine*; Henri Arque, Stanislas Boutry, Fernand Marin (trombones), Vocal Ensemble Philippe Caillard conducted by Philippe Caillard. Haydn Society HS-9008, \$4.98.

▲NOWADAYS there is nothing startling in encountering a demonstration of affinity between a medieval and a contemporary musical work, such as is found here. The piece by Jean Langlais, of

structural detail, or the broader aspects of pure music-making, the results reflect a potent intellect, definitively projected. Decca's reproduction is comparable with the other values of the disc. —A.K.

HINDEMITH: *Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra* (1947); *Nobilissima Visione Suite for Orchestra*; Louis Cahuzac (clarinet) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Paul Hindemith. Angel 35490, \$4.98 or \$3.98.

▲THIS is a beautiful recording. The ballet suite, ten years older than the concerto, represents the more relaxed Hindemith. Its polyphonic spinning (without which there is no Hindemith) uses yarn of less bright colors, and the tonality has been drawn much closer together, so that there is a total effect of simplicity. Within the lyricism that is similar to "*Mathis*" one will find the engaging techniques of fugue, passacaglia, *et al.* Hindemith has no match for such highly geared, technical polyphonic invention. Every musical composition has its problem of balance, but any lack of equipoise in a concerto is a double defeat—for the work itself, and for the soloist. In the clarinet concerto the functions balance to the greatest degree. Cahuzac's playing is warm, and his elocutionary power gives the composition a sensitive transparency. Hindemith's creative trade-marks dot the ballet suite. The sound throughout is perfect. —A.C.

course, was admittedly composed with medieval antecedents in mind. More specifically, the work was composed at the request of the Abbé Julien for use in a televised Christmas Midnight Mass in the famous Cathedral of Notre Dame de Paris in 1954. Inevitably, in view of the circumstances of the commission, the work is more concerned with sonority than with musical content. Since one of the aims of the project was to have the congregation participate, a separate unison choral part was set in opposition to, or in combination with, a small three-part male choir, with an organ supporting each, and all blended with a four-voice brass choir. The sum is undeniably im-

pressive, and must have been quite effective in its festive performance. One is left to wonder, however, when this recording was made: the notes say only that it was made in Notre Dame itself, but is this an on-the-spot recording of that original performance? If so, it is all the more to be admired as a technical achievement, for it is very good, the only flaw being some moments of quavering in the tape, probably the result of the great reverberation in the cathedral acoustics.

Whereas this Langlais recording had the participation of the composer to give it a stamp of authenticity, the music of Guillaume Dufay (c.1400-1474) cannot be so blest today. In addition there are problems of performance which require use of imagination and initiative on the part of the performers. One may wonder if in this performance a little *too* much imagination has been used. The annotations, needlessly vague about the life of the composer—more is known about it than they are willing to admit—go to great lengths to defend the use of instruments with the three-part chorus. There is no need for such defense, since this was a common practice in early music during its own time. To justify, however, as they try to, the participation of instruments because of the composer's use of "hocketing", is hardly sound. Hockets (which mean "hiccoughs" and refer to a practice of achieving a jagged rhythmic emphasis by the calculated insertion of many rests within patterns of phrases even though this breaks up individual words of the text) were common in the vocal music of the fourteenth century, and their use in this first of the seven Masses of Dufay would not necessarily be "unvocal" or indicate instrumental instead of vocal intentions. But in spite of some possible miscalculations in this performance the music apparently does call for instrumental participation and the presentation here may reveal, to many who think medieval and Renaissance polyphony was solely a vocal matter, that the use of instruments is not only authentic but also effective. The sound is resonant and atmospheric, although a

bit more clarity in both chorus and instruments would have enhanced the result and increased the intelligibility of the structure.

The over-all evaluation of these two Masses, the one contemporary and the other old, cannot of course but favor the Dufay work, a substantial and elevated piece; in comparison the Langlais work seems rather shallow. Still, they make an interesting and in some ways complementary pair, and this reissue (the disc was released for a brief period before the reorganization of the Haydn Society but not previously sent out for review) is decidedly a welcome restoration. —J.W.B.

LECLAIR: *Concerto in C, Op. 7, No. 3, for Oboe and Strings*; **BLAVET:** *Concerto in A minor for Flute and Strings*; **CORRETTE:** *Concerto in D for Four Bassoons and Harpsichord, "The Phoenix"; Concerto No. 6 in G, Op. 3, for Three Flutes and Organ*; Pierre Pierlot (oboe), Jean-Pierre Rampal, Robert Hériché, Christian Lardé (flutes), Paul Hogne, Raymond Droulez, André Sennedat, Ange Mangendre (bassoons), Anne-Marie Beckensteiner (harpsichord), Marie-Claire Alain (organ), Jean-Marie Leclair Ensemble conducted by Jean-François Paillard. Westminster XWN-18694, \$4.98.

Adler, Wanaussek (Leclair).....Vox PL-10150
Hewitt, Soloists (Corrette).....Epic LC-3383

▲THESE four concertos for various winds are offered by Erato-Westminster as examples of the works of three relatively unfamiliar eighteenth-century French composers. Yet each has had some attention on records: Jean-Marie Leclair (1697-1764) is well represented on LP, with a number of his works available. Michel Blavet (1700-1768) is represented with a current Westminster release (OPW-11033) of a stage work, while a recent Epic disc (reviewed ARG Nov. 1957, p. 104-5) introduced Michel Corrette (1709-1795) with the very same Concerto for Three Flutes recorded here, but with the accompaniment played by full string orchestra instead of organ. The first two works on this record, occupying side one, are rather routine eighteenth-century French wind concerti. The Le-

clair work was written alternately for flute or oboe; it may be heard in the flute version on a Vox disc. The high point of the *Blavet* is a pair of Gavottes which form the slow movement. Corrette, on the other hand, seemed interested in all sorts of multiples of instruments; unlike Vivaldi, this was not, however, for the purpose of experimentation but rather, apparently, simply for novelty and to keep his various pupils

busy on their many different instruments. These two works are brief (indeed, at least one more could have been fitted on this side, so much time is left over). The one for four bassoons is rather bumptious and that for three flutes is once more liquid and graceful, as one might expect from the scoring of each. The recording is fine, though the acoustics on side one are rather dry and the bass is occasionally quite resonant. —J.W.B.

A very touching and treasurable collaboration

MAHLER: *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*; Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (baritone) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler.
BRAHMS: *Seven Songs from Op. 32*; the same singer with Hertha Klust (piano). Angel 35522, \$4.98 or \$3.98.

(Mahler)

Metternich (br). Ludwig, Rad. Berlin... Ur. 7016
 Foster (bs-br). Horenstein, Bamberg... Vox 9100
 Merriman (m-s). Beinum, Amsterdam... Epic 6023
 Flagstad, Boulton, Vienna Phil... Lon. 5330

UNTIL NOW there had never been a really first-rate version of Mahler's *Songs of a Wanderer* in the American LP catalogues, though six listings have from time to time reposed there, of qualities ranging from workable (Merriman) to inferior (Metternich). It would have been intolerable for this situation to continue longer, considering the fact that three other versions exist which can be definitely classed as exceptional: (1) the 1948 English Decca 78-rpm recording by Eugenia Zareska, with Eduard Van Beinum conducting, (2) the recording made in Hesse about the same time by the late Heinrich Schlusnus, with Winfried Zillig, just recently released in Europe by Deutsche Grammophon but not presently envisioned for American pressing, and (3) the 1955 HMV recording by Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau and Wilhelm Furtwängler. With such distinguished representation, we can be most thankful that the last-named at least has now finally found its way across the ocean.

For here is an example of Mahler for baritone and orchestra almost on a par with Rehkemper's historic recording of



Fischer-Dieskau: melodically and emotionally, full range

the *Kindertotenlieder* in the early 1930s. The "almost" probably reflects the difference in age and experience of the respective singers. Fischer-Dieskau had not yet reached his thirty-second birthday when he made this recording; but neither had Mahler when he wrote the work, under the direct influence of a passionately unhappy love affair. At any rate there is something very touching in this collaboration of young Fischer-Dieskau with Furtwängler shortly before the latter's death in his late sixties. Mahler was in fact just twenty-four when he composed this cycle, but surely he could not at any age have depicted with more surgical accuracy and refinement of orchestral detail his own youthful agony and its eventual sublimation.

Each successive male version of the cycle released here has shown a considerable improvement over its predecessor, both interpretatively and in sheer physical equipment. As far as the latter point

is concerned, it should be enough to mention that Ludwig Metternich's range was so restricted that he had to transpose at *both* ends—top notes downward and bottom notes upward. Norman Foster took care of the bottom and permitted himself a couple of high Gs and G flats, notably at the climax of *I Have a Glowing Knife in My Breast*, where the only *fortissimo* top note in the entire cycle is to be found. Now Fischer-Dieskau gives us, alone of the three men, the full melodic range, and, not unexpectedly, the full emotional range as well, all supported with characteristic finesse by the veteran Furtwängler.

Since the *Wanderer* is obviously a male singer's cycle, describing a man's sorrow, there would now seem little reason to lament the unmicrogrooved Eugenia Zareska version mentioned above. But the truth cannot always be conveniently packaged, and the fact is that, transcending the sex barrier, Zareska has given one of the very great Mahler performances. This utterly amazing rendition, with its soft, pure high notes floating over a lower register of tragic intensity, was given with its German enunciation compounded by a heavy Polish accent! Yet here was the living, breathing *Wanderer* that made pale ghosts of its colleagues, a flash of insight that even the sensitive and intelligent dedication of Fischer-Dieskau cannot match. The Angel recording lacks, too, the filtered sunlight from top to bottom of the Decca 78, and it is a little weak in the reproduction of some of the lower instruments compared to the recent London and Epic. However, it compares favorably in sheer beauty of sound with anything so far produced, and the Philharmonia makes its last assignment under Furtwängler a treasurable one.

When the Zareska-Van Beinum first appeared, by the way, critics questioned the unfamiliarly slow tempo of the song *On the Morning Field I Trod*, which later occurs in the opening of the First Symphony. It corresponds to Horenstein's tempo in the symphony, which I think is about right, though in the song it does make the exclamation "*Heia!*" resemble less a cry of joy and more the "*Heehaw!*" of the donkey in Mahler's *Praise of Lofty*

Intellect. It is marked "*Gemächlich*" (leisurely) in the song and "*Im Anfang sehr gemächlich*" (very leisurely at first) in the symphony. The effect was not repeated by Van Beinum in the Merriman recording, where he reverts to the more popular reading. Now Furtwängler takes it even more slowly, corresponding to Scherchen's uphill tread in the symphony.

On the reverse side, Fischer-Dieskau is virtually without competition, for most of these songs are receiving their first recording here. As a matter of fact this is about the first time on LP that any group of Brahms *Lieder*, aside from the *Erste Gesänge* and *Die schöne Magelone*, has been treated as a group (due in part to the disorganized way they are published in the various collections), and it is certainly a far worthier approach. This is especially true of Op. 32, which consists of nine songs from poems of G.F. Daumer and Auguste Von Platen. Though not specifically designated as a song cycle, the group nevertheless displays a strong unity of style and subject. The central subject here is in fact the same as Mahler's *Wanderer* cycle and Schubert's two Müller cycles (both previously recorded by Fischer-Dieskau)—that of rejection in love—and the direct comparison of the three composers' extended treatments of this universal theme that is now permitted us on LP is quite fascinating. All three explore many facets of its infinite variety, yet always in a very personalized manner. Immediate impressions might include the strong rhythmic propulsion of Schubert, the stark harmonic gloom of Brahms, and the sharp contrapuntal sparring of Mahler, though obviously there are overlappings of these. Seven of the nine Brahms songs are presented here, and of these only the very last emerges from the prevailing minor mode—the lovely and popular *Wie bist du, meine Königin*. The baritone has another worthy collaborator in Hertha Klust, and the recording is full and resonant.

As LP couplings of music by different composers go, this is a relatively interesting and intelligent choice. The translations by Robert Ponsonby, however, are simplified and highly perfunctory phrases.

—J.D.

MOOR: *Suite for Four Cellos, Op. 95;*

BARTÓK: *Old Dance Tunes from "Fifteen Hungarian Peasant Songs" (Nos. 7-15),* transcribed by Laszlo Varga; **VIVALDI:** *Concerto Grosso in D minor, Op. 3, No. 11,* transcribed by Varga; **JONGEN:** *Two Pieces, Op. 89;* New York Philharmonic Cello Quartet. Decca DL-9946, \$3.98.

▲LISTENING to these gentlemen is like being caught in Penelope's web. Granting the extreme rarity of music composed for four cellos, nothing is more futile than a senseless transcription. At one time transcriptions made it possible to hear certain music rarely played in its original state. With long-playing records we do have Vivaldi in his original state; we gain nothing by listening to four cellos, or four saxophones, play the same music. This reminds me of the most famous arrangement of all: the "Hallelujah Chorus" in a version for two unaccompanied flutes! The Bartók is also a sheep adorned by ill-fitting wolf's clothing. I understand the unusual appeal (as a concert "attraction") of four cellos, but (with apologies to "Annie Get Your Gun") anything they can do a string quartet can do better. The reason for using four cellos is not apparent in the two original pieces on the disc. Both the Jongen and the Moor point up the failure of a combination in which the soprano line must sound like a soprano, but always has such a strained sonority that it nullifies the values of the tenor and baritone. Both of these pieces are played very well, as is the Bartók, but the tempi in the Vivaldi exemplify stylistic irresponsibility. —A.C.

●
MOZART: The Complete Cassations, Serenades, and Divertimenti, Vol. 2: *Serenade No. 1 in D, K. 100; Divertimento No. 2 in D, K. 131;* M-G-M Orchestra conducted by Arthur Winograd. M-G-M E-3637, \$4.98.

Beecham (K. 131).....Angel 35459

▲M-G-M has, in the past, given the record collector much for which to be truly grateful. The current Mozart series does not, so far, fall into that category in my opinion. Neither Winograd nor his

ensemble seem to have a feeling for Mozart. These works require delicacy, precision, and above all, humor. They get none of these things. In the case of the First Serenade, this is perhaps not such a serious matter. It is the only recording currently in the catalogues; for that reason interested listeners will be inclined to overlook a good deal in matters of performance and interpretation. The Divertimento, however, is a horse of another color. Beecham and the Royal Philharmonic have given us some idea of how it should sound. Another, more literal version can be found on Westminster. The present pair are not downright bad—but they certainly should not form the cornerstone of any Mozart library. It is to be hoped (a) that someone else will see fit to undertake the truly commendable project M-G-M has undertaken and/or (b) that M-G-M will improve its quality as it goes along. —R.A.

■
MOZART: *Concerto No. 14 in E flat, K. 449; Concerto No. 22 in E flat, K. 482;* Paul Badura-Skoda (piano) and the Vienna Konzerthaus Orchestra conducted from the keyboard by the soloist. Westminster XWN-18661, \$4.98.

MOZART: *Concerto No. 19 in F, K. 459; Concerto No. 24 in C minor, K. 491;* same artists. Westminster XWN-18662, \$4.98.

▲HERE is a one-man show of important proportions. Badura-Skoda not only plays and conducts but has written the liner notes and some of the cadenzas. Let it be immediately stated: these are excellent performances. Badura-Skoda is no esoteric scholar, nor is he hidebound. His Mozart is transparent, but it is mounted on solid frame of performance. This composer poses a problem only when the proposition is that of rubato. Undue rubato gives tonal emphasis where it does not belong, and on this technical path many a pianist has slipped, mistaking sentimentality (a damnable word that should be eliminated from musical discussion) for feeling. Mozart must be played with sentiment; his music's flow must not be checked by undue emphasis at cadential points; its vitality must be

permitted, not driven. Badura-Skoda understands all these conditions. The overemphasis, here and there, of dynamic contrast between a *piano* and *forte* is less "zart" than it is Beethovenesque, but this does not negate the accuracy of performance. The pairings of the concertos deserves notice. The contrapuntal wizardry of the *F major* contrasts to the monumental depth probed in the great *C minor*, and the cheerfulness plus warmth of the two *E flat* concerti only make apparent again that Mozart was probably the greatest of all masters of this form. The immense wealth of these works is matched by the care shown in the recording—even if the orchestra does not maintain equilibrium with the soloist. Pitch locations sometimes stray ever so slightly, and at times there is insufficient power to form the proper balance with the piano's sonority. These recordings should not, however, be overlooked.

—A.C.

•
MOZART: *Flute Concerto No. 2 in D, K. 314*; **SCHUMANN:** *Adagio and Allegro for Horn, Op. 70*; **HAYDN:** *Trumpet Concerto in E flat*; André Pepin (flute); Edmond Leloir (French horn); Paolo Longinotti (trumpet); L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. London LL-3020, \$3.98.

(Haydn)
Wobitsch.....Haydn Soc. 9031
Eskdale.....Vanguard 454

▲OF these first-desk men André Pepin is probably the most successful, both as regards style and intonation. It is a slightly colorless performance, especially in the first movement, but from the technical standpoint all is admirable. The one factor which prevents this from being an outstanding interpretation, however, is the lackluster accompaniment on Ansermet's part; for all of the conductor's sensitive phrasing, the music plods along with little trace of the sparkle which it requires. Unfortunately there are no really good versions of this wonderful concerto available. Originally written for French horn (or cello) and piano, the Schumann *Adagio and Allegro* is heard here with the piano part orchestrated by Ansermet him-

self. Regrettably poor intonation on the soloist's part and some sloppy orchestral playing rob this short piece of much of its charm. The Haydn Concerto still receives its best performance from Helmut Wobitsch on Haydn Society. The present reading suffers from slightly slow tempos (especially in the first movement), a rather heavy sounding trumpet, and poor balance between soloist and orchestra. Ansermet's attention to the finesses of the score is admirable, but one can hardly hear the accompaniment. For all that, though, the sound of the trumpet is reproduced with amazing realism. —I.K.

•
MOZART: *Mass in C minor, K. 427*; Wilma Lipp (soprano); Christa Ludwig (mezzo-soprano); Murray Dickie (tenor); Walter Berry (basso); Vienna Oratorio Choir and Pro Musica Orchestra, conducted by Ferdinand Grossmann. Vox PL-10.270, \$4.98.

Von Zallinger.....Haydn Society 9025
Moralt.....Epic SC-6009

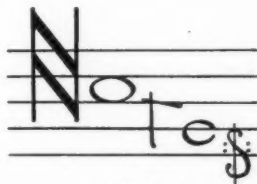
▲ALTHOUGH left incomplete by its composer, the *C minor Mass* is accounted one of Mozart's major works. Even so, the portions that have come down to us are curiously uneven, which may account for the master's inability to bring his work

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to its fullness. It is a long way, stylistically, from the almost Bachian grandeur of the *Qui tollis* to the rather operatic *Et incarnatus est*. Because of this unevenness, it seems to me that the various attempts to fill out the score, usually by transplanting music from the composer's other works, are misguided. Better take the *Mass* for the unfinished, magnificent thing it is. This third LP recording shares with the original Haydn Society version the virtue of bringing the work to us in this way; that issued by Epic has been filled out by Paumgartner. It may be considered a further advantage that Grossmann gets his performance on two sides, though in doing this he has adopted tempi rather brisker than the ideal. For example, the famous soprano aria *Et incarnatus est* loses the mystic quality that saves it from seeming inappropriate, though Miss Lipp's voice is appealing enough. The quartet on the whole, though satisfactory, seems to me a cut or two below that of the Epic set. And the choral tone is recorded with less clarity. On the other hand, this is certainly a more carefully prepared performance than that of the Haydn Society, and I am sure will be generally preferred, despite my objections to the tempi. The choice, therefore, is between these fragments of pure Mozart and Paumgartner's adaptation in a superior performance.

—P.L.M.

MOZART: *Symphony No. 35 in D, K. 385 ("Haffner"); Symphony No. 41 in C, K. 551 ("Jupiter")*; Israel Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Josef Krips. London LL-3002, \$3.98.

MOZART: *Symphony No. 35 in D, K. 385 ("Haffner"); Divertimento No. 15 in B flat, K. 287*; Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Herbert Von Karajan. Angel 35562, \$4.98 or \$3.98.

("Haffner")
Walter, N. Y. Philharmonic, Columbia ML-4693 ("Jupiter")
Retner, Chicago, RCA Victor LM-6035
Walter, N. Y. Phil., Columbia ML-5014
Toscanini, NBC, RCA Victor LM-1030

▲EAST is east and west is west, and somewhere between the twain so characterized by these two approaches lies the ideal Mozartian. Karajan's dryly in-

hibited and small-scale reading of the K. 385 suggests the salon presentation so common in the composer's day. He substitutes rigidity and precision for the warmth of phrasing and plasticity of line so liberally lavished by Krips in his accounts. But the Viennese manners adopted by the latter tend to overlook the crispness of attack and rhythmic impulse needed for conviction. Karajan's preference is toward a leaner-toned and smaller ensemble, while Krips' is for a larger and thicker-textured orchestra. And the latter's slow tempi (in both fourth movements especially) place a heavy burden on continuity and line. Karajan gives the deliriously beautiful *Divertimento* in B flat a delineation of far greater fervor and expressive appeal than the overside "Haffner". The contribution of the late Dennis Brain is an outstanding factor in the net result. The leisure adopted is more attractive to these ears than the faster pace and greater urgency of Toscanini, who also omits the second minuet (No. 5) included in this recording. The sound here is superior (though still not contemporary) to the low-level, muffled, and rather dated reproduction of the "Haffner". London's release boasts its customary clarity, although the instrumental balance isn't so acute as it might have been.

—A.K.

PERGOLESI: *Salve Regina; Stabat Mater*; Bruna Rizzoli (soprano); Claudia Carbi (contralto); Women's Chorus and Chamber Orchestra of the Teatro Comunale, Florence, conducted by Francesco Molinari-Pradelli. Epic LC-3460, \$3.98.

▲THE *Salve Regina*, for soprano and orchestra, has been with us a couple of times before in arrangements rather different from this. The one still listed is sung in a much lower key by Herta Glaz, and it is approached in a more positive, dramatic manner. The reserved and devotional spirit of Miss Rizzoli's performance seems to me more in keeping, while at the same time I find the sheer loveliness of her voice altogether winning.

The famous *Stabat Mater* currently has four other listings, most of which have

struck me as falling short of satisfaction. The most recent of these was an exception, in many ways an excellent account of the score, sung by Margot Guillaume and Jeanne Deroubaix in Decca's Archive Series. My preference for this new release is decided partly by the use of the

two-part women's chorus to lend variety to the solo singing, and partly by the smooth richness of Miss Rizzoli's singing. Miss Guillaume, in the Decca performance, seemed to me a little below her best. In both cases a considerable share in the honors go to the contralto;

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▲THE "*Boris Godunov*" selections were previously available on a Bluebird LP, but with a difference. That disc contained the opening chorus from the Prologue and the scene between Boris and Prince Shuisky that precedes the Clock Scene; but it did not include so much of the Inn Scene as this new release. There is far greater value in the new version, because it includes all but one of the selections originally issued in a 78 rpm album called "Russian Operatic Arias" (the missing number, as it happens, was not an opera aria at all, but Mussorgsky's *Song of the Flea*). Like Chaliapin and Christoff, Kipnis enjoys singing other roles than his own in "*Boris*", so we have a glimpse of Varlaam in the inn. But he is one Russian basso who makes no attempt to sound like his great compatriot (whom he admires greatly—he recently told a gathering of record collectors that those who had never seen Chaliapin as Boris had never seen "*Boris*"). Indeed, his conception of the character is distinctly his own. It is more thoughtful, less elemental; not so towering a figure

of tragedy, but very much a human being. Certainly in the generation that followed Chaliapin his was the most distinguished and credible Boris; it is good to have this generous sampling of it. For sheer vocal richness it would be hard to surpass Kipnis' singing in the recital of arias. I wonder if Prince Gremin's Air has ever sounded so warm and noble? —P.L.M.

●
MUSSORGSKY: "*Boris Godunov*" — *Song of Varlaam; St. Basil's Cathedral Scene; Scene in the Monastery Cell; Death of Boris*; **RACHMANINOFF:** "*Aleko*"—*Cavatina of Aleko*; Mark Reizen (bass), Ivan Kozlovsky (tenor), Nikander Khaneyev (tenor), Ivan Sipayev (bass), Bronislava Zlatogorova (mezzo), Georgi Nelepp (tenor), and the Chorus and Orchestra of the Bolshoi Theater conducted by Vassili Nebolsin and Nikolai Golovanov. Monitor MC-2016, \$4.98.

▲WITH a throat of gold where bronze would be more apt, but mildly true to pitch and without wobble, the sixty-year-old Mark Reizen gives us an always-aware rather than an unhinged Czar. His death scene, indeed, is probably the most ungasping you will ever hear. On the other hand, his Varlaam spits out the gorgeous Russian sounds with unforgettable verve. The Rachmaninoff bit is pleasant and undistinguished, and the whole is quite nicely recorded. While there have been good and great Borises from Chaliapin and Didur through Kipnis and Christoff, however, none of them, I think, owned the part to the degree Kozlovsky *owns* the Simpleton. Also, the conductor here allows him his rubato, which does not happen on Period's "*Boris*" with the same tenor. —J.B.L.

Carbi, acutally rather a mezzo, has long seemed to me one of the most distinguished of the Italian singers currently recording, and she is in excellent form here. The conductor keeps the nicely paced performance well in hand, and the orchestra supports the singers admirably.

—P.L.M.

PROKOFIEV: *Suite from "The Love for Three Oranges"; Scythian Suite;* London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. Mercury MG-50157, \$4.98.

▲MUSIC such as this gives Dorati—and Mercury—ample opportunity to gather up excitement into one big sonic bundle and thrust it at the listener. I am sure that Prokofiev would approve, because these colorful compositions call for just such an approach. Don't expect the neighbors to be happy, however. As usual, Mercury has etched some tremendous dynamic contrasts into this disc, and when the volume is high enough to hear all soft passages, the loud ones may break a few windows. Dorati is at his best with the more barbaric elements of these scores, which growl and rage in splendid fashion.

—D.H.M.

PURCELL: *Music for the Funeral of Queen Mary, 1695;* **J. S. BACH:** *Magnificat in D;* Ilse Wolf (soprano); Helen Watts (contralto); Richard Lewis (tenor); Thomas Hemsley (baritone); Geraint Jones Singers and Orchestra conducted by Geraint Jones. Angel 45027, \$4.98 or \$3.98.

Colombo.....Oiseau-Lyre 50101
Ridel.....Westminster XWN-18465
Leitner.....Decca DL-9557
Reinhardt.....Vox PL-8890
Prohaska.....Bach Guild BG-555

▲SEVERAL things about this performance of the *Magnificat* set it above the competition. Of the various conductors who have recorded the work, Jones succeeds best in making it sound jubilant and festive. This is partly because of the light-hearted tempi he sets, and partly because of the clarity of the choral and orchestral performance. Add to this an excellent set of soloists, with special honors owing to Miss Watts for her touching *Esurientes* and to Lewis for an

exciting *Deposuit potentes*. The decision, therefore, seems to me clear enough, except for the fact that Rolf Reinhardt, in his Vox recording, includes the Christmas interpolations, for which reason I imagine no real Bachian will want to give it up. The Purcell music which completes the second side here is unspeakably beautiful and touching. Written for the funeral of his queen (re-using some earlier movements), it was performed later the same year at Purcell's own. The suite consists of a march, which serves as both overture and postlude, two anthems, and a canzona. Sensitively performed by singers and instrumentalists, this recording is highly recommended.

—P.L.M.

RACHMANINOFF: *6 Moments musicaux, Op 16;* **POULENC:** *12 Improvisations;* Elly Kassman (piano). Lyricord LL-61, \$4.98.

▲RACHMANINOFF himself recorded only one of these 1896 pieces, No. 2 in E flat minor, and a comparison of that performance, no longer available, with the present one shows that Miss Kassman is not able to summon the magical Rachmaninoff rhapsodic sweep into her playing. All the notes are perfectly in place, but there is none of the dynamic variety called for in the score nor even the subtle rhythmic variety and infinitesimal shading which made the composer's own performances so full of meaning. The end result is competent, routine, and ever so slightly dull. The twelve *Improvisations* were written between 1932 and 1942 and a handful were recorded by Poulenc; that shellac disc is also, unfortunately, no longer available. There exists a French version of the whole set which is not issued here. No. 5 of the group is available in an Angel recording of miscellaneous French keyboard works played by Jean Casadesus. The present performance is quite satisfactory and technically excellent, but Poulenc's typical wit does not always come through the way it should. Perhaps Miss Kassman is taking him too seriously, for that is the general effect of her playing. The sound on this record favors the bass of the piano; the highs seem to be slightly attenuated.

—I.K.



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Paul Wittgenstein Plays Piano Music For The Left Hand: *Concerto in D Major for the Left Hand* (Ravel); *Chaconne* (Bach—Arr. Brahms); *Meeresstille* (Schubert — Arr. Liszt); *Romanze*; *Prelude & Fugue* (Reger); Paul Wittgenstein (piano); members of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra conducted by Max Rudolf (in the Ravel). Period SLP-742, \$4.98.

(Ravel)
Blancard, Ansermet.....London LL-797

▲IT should be said first that this is not only a very interesting recording but a very valuable one from the historical viewpoint. The Vienna-born Wittgenstein is now seventy-one and residing in New York City, where he teaches piano. Just before the first World War he made his debut as a pianist, but his career was interrupted by the war; he served as an Austrian soldier, was wounded, and lost his right arm. In spite of this severe handicap Wittgenstein managed to establish himself as a concert artist, playing music written only for the left hand. Not only did he create a sensation but also he caused a great many important composers to write on commission for him—Richard Strauss, Korngold, Prokofiev, Britten, and of course Ravel. Strangely, this Period release is his one and only recording; why he has never before recorded at least the Ravel is hard to fathom, but we must be grateful to Period that this disc is made available to us.

Frankly, however, I was very disappointed in Wittgenstein's playing. Aside from the orchestral accompaniment, which is barely adequate (due mostly to unspacious, muffled recording in which important instrumental passages frequently are only barely audible), it was surprising to me that the man for whom the Concerto was written should perform the work with so little regard for what is commonly termed the Ravel style. Wittgenstein's style includes banging, over-pedaling, sloppiness, slight alterations in the score, and in general a rather heavy approach. The story of the pianist's alteration with the composer is fairly well known and does not merit telling again here except to mention that Ravel

did not approve of Wittgenstein's changes in the music. Whether or not he approved of his interpretation as such is hard to say, but there are other recordings of the Concerto (including an old Cortot performance), which for me at least get much closer to the heart of the work. Ravel's marvelously cynical, war-provoked music nevertheless receives a stylish performance of sorts from the pianist; where the music calls for a big tone and where there are gigantic display passages Wittgenstein shows plenty of power and forcefulness.

The Bach *Chaconne* has never before been recorded in the Brahms arrangement for left hand. It is a marvelous transcription, which is in fact much closer in essence to the original solo violin version than the more familiar Busoni one for two hands. Regrettably, Wittgenstein's performance leaves much to be desired. As in the Ravel, there is over-pedaling, banging, a kind of poking at notes, and a very poor sense of style—although here, certainly, a great deal more freedom is allowable. Taking into consideration any possible interpretative quirks, it is still hard to excuse the sheer sloppiness of execution. But even more difficult to condone are Wittgenstein's "additions" to Brahms' arrangement: octave doublings, interpolated notes, at times complete changes in harmonies. This does a great disservice to Brahms.

The other works appear to be played somewhat better, but the abovementioned characteristics are still occasionally in evidence. The sound throughout the recording is fair; the piano (heard much too loud in the Ravel) is slightly too resonant and bass-heavy. Perhaps Wittgenstein can no longer play as he used to, technically; in that case it is too bad that such a recording as this could not have been made when he was truly in his prime. But since this is the only example of his playing we must take it for what it is.

And in spite of all the bad faults it still remains a fascinating document historically, especially for the Ravel. Whether or not you like the performances, I foresee that this record will become a collector's item.

—I.K.

RAVEL: *Piano Concerto in G*; **RACHMANINOFF:** *Piano Concerto No. 4 in G minor, Op. 40*; *Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli* (piano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Ettore Gracis. Angel 35567, \$4.98 or \$3.98. (See also stereodisc reviews.)

(Ravel)
Bernstein
(pianist and conductor)...RCA Camden CAL-214
(Rachmaninoff)
Rachmaninoff,
Ormandy, Phila.....RCA Victor LM-6123

▲THIS performance of the Ravel has almost everything—unity of concept, flashing vitality to spare, and technical brilliance. All it lacks is an innate understanding of and a feeling for the American jazz idiom in general and the Gershwin style in particular. That “low-down” lazy quality of a slurred trumpet passage; the sarcastic bleat of an inflected clarinet; a way of “saying things” with a piccolo (at the outset of the third movement especially) that makes one squirm; the kind of impulse that can’t really be written in the five lines and four spaces but that every jazz man instinctively knows; a way of playing a written rhythm just off

the rhythm—these are the missing elements in the otherwise excellent performance. But few musicians have been able to successfully straddle the classical and the jazz styles. One has; he is Leonard Bernstein. The powers at Columbia coyly suggest that perhaps a new version with him has been taped. In the meantime his spine-tingling interpretation is very much available on Camden. The Rachmaninoff musical dialect being more “classical”, it is easier for the Angel artists to grasp. They make a most persuasive *tour de force* of the seldom-heard Fourth Concerto. The sound is superb throughout. —A.K.

●
RESPIGHI: *The Birds*; *Brazilian Impressions*; London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. Mercury MG-50153, \$4.98.

(*The Birds*)
Caracciolo; Scarlatti Orch.....Angel 35310
Litschauer; Vienna State Op. Orch. Vanguard 433
(*Brazilian Impressions*)
Galliera; Philharmonia Orch.....Angel 35405

▲Excellent sound and first-rate performances make this a most pleasurable recording. Dorati elicits a maximum of atmosphere from the *Brazilian Impressions*; the second section, *Butantan*, where Respighi evoked the mood of the snake farm near São Paulo so skillfully, is particularly successful. The conductor’s treatment of *The Birds* is a little heavier than that by Caracciolo on Angel, but no less sensitive. —I.K.

●
ROIG: “*Cecilia Valdés*”; Ruth Fernández (Dolores), Martha Pérez (Cecilia), Aida Pujol (Isabel), Francisco Naya (Leonardo), unidentified chorus and orchestra conducted by Gonzalo Roig. Montilla FM-118, \$4.98.

▲ACCORDING to the jacket credits this performance was recorded in Spain, but to these ears it sounds like the same one that used to be available on Angel 65001 or, even earlier, on Soria 70001—and that was ostensibly recorded in Cuba. No matter. The sonics here are quite satisfactory, and the work remains a charmer. Certainly it is the most accessible of all zarzuelas. Operaphiles who have hesitated to venture into this genre could do no better than to take the bold step with “*Cecilia Valdés*”. I have no idea what else Roig has composed



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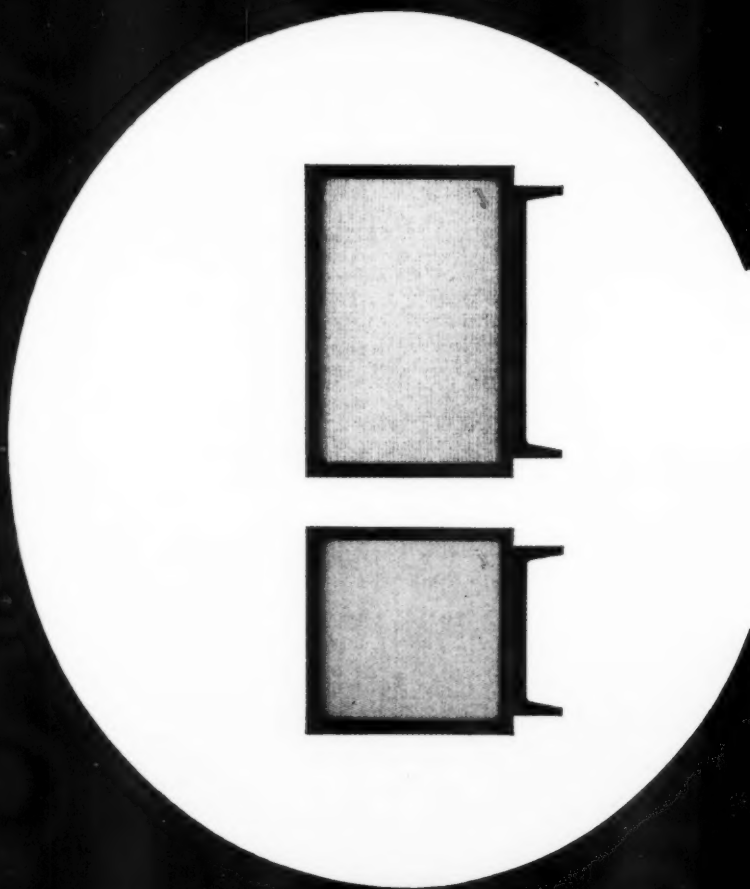
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(other than a Tin Pan Alley perennial yecept *Quiéreme mucho*), but if this delightful work is representative of the man's talent for the lyric theater I would want to hear more of his music. Surely he has written other operettas, or perhaps an opera or two, in the quarter-century since "*Cecilia Valdés*" was introduced at Havana.

—J. L.

•
SCARLATTI, D.: *Sonatas for Harpsichord Vol. 19—Sonatas in F (L. 474), F (L. 328), D (L. 11), B flat (L. 248), G minor (L. 312), A (L. 45), A (L. 483), D (L. 337) B flat A (L. 319), A (L. 240), G (L. 333), G minor (L. 340);* Fernando Valenti (harpsichord). Westminster XWN-18705, \$4.98.

▲AFTER a breathing spell of nearly a year, Valenti and Westminster continue their project of recording the complete Sonatas of the digitally diligent Domenico. (Vols. 17 and 18, XWN-18460 and 18461, respectively, were reviewed in the September, 1957 issue.) At the going

rate of twelve Sonatas per record the score is now 19 discs down and 27¼ to go. That is, 228 down, 322 to go. The critical reaction inevitably must remain the same as previously: Valenti tends to bear down upon these works heavily. As a result, the beauty and depth inherent in a delicate piece like the L. 45 are diminished rather than pointed up, or so it seems to me. Yet no one can deny Valenti's splendid technical facility, nor his great deal of interpretative artistry—his L. 340 is a fine performance by any standards. And, in all fairness, an honest evaluation of this series cannot be made on a basis of individual records, but must wait until all the volumes are released: the very scope of Valenti's dogged project should be as much a factor in judgment as each specific performance. As always, Westminster's recording is clear and fresh, but it is regrettable that the same jacket notes are repeated from one volume to another.

—J.W.B.

Album de Musique (Offert par G. Rossini a Mademoiselle Louise Carlier): *Arietta (Mi languero tacendo)* (Rossini); *Dolente imagine di Fille mia* (Bellini); *Romance* (Paer); *Le Printemps arrive (Ronde villageoise)* (Bruguière); *Il n'aurait pas dû venir* (Panseron); *Arietta Costa (Trova un sol, mia bella Clori)* (Tadolini); *La Gita in Gondola* (Marliani); *Aure amiche, ah! non spirate* (Mercadante); *La rosa appassita (Romanza in forma di elegia)* (Morlacchi); *Arietta (Soave l'istante)* (Meyerbeer); *Air à trois notes* (Berton); *Ah dors en paix, mon bel enfant* (Bertin); *Arietta (Se cerca... se dice)* (Cherubini); *L'Adieu (Romance)* (Spontini); *Le Dante dans le Paradis* (Onslow); *Ognuno tira l'acqua al suo mulino (Cante popolare Toscano)* (Giordigiani); *Chi ami?* (Bazzini); Suzanne Danco (soprano); Francesco Molinari-Pradelli (piano). Epic LC-3442, \$3.98.

▲IN March of 1835 Rossini paid tribute to a lady in the form of a musical autograph album to which a number of the

most eminent composers had contributed. The album was recently brought to light by an Italian dealer, and its contents are recorded on this disc. The songs and ariettes are as graceful and charming as Rossini's gesture. A couple of them are fairly well-known—the moving Bellini piece and the Bertron air which stays within the compass of three notes. It would be too much to claim that there is great individuality in most of the pieces—one would be hard put to it to distinguish the work of one composer from another's; we must remember that these songs were written before the French art song as we know it had begun to take shape. The general style is much in the vein of opera, and opera, at that, of an earlier day. Still, there are surprising things, such as the little drama offered by the aging Cherubini. Miss Danco sings them all in perfect taste and with a beautifully controlled tone altogether in keeping. The well-known conductor Molinari-Pradelli provides just the appropriate piano background, and the recorded sound is in excellent balance.

—P.L.M.

SCHUBERT: *Symphony No. 8 in B minor ("Unfinished")*; **BRAHMS:** *Variations on a Theme By Haydn, Op. 56a*; Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. Decca DL-9975, \$3.98.

SCHUBERT: *Symphony No. 6 in C; Symphony No. 8 in B minor ("Unfinished")*; Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Eduard Van Beinum, Epic LC-3441, \$3.98.

(Brahms-Haydn)
Toscanini, NBC..... RCA Victor LM-1725
Walter, N. Y. Phil..... Columbia ML-5076

▲SUFFICE it to say that both the twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth versions of the "Unfinished" qualify for a high place, with Fricsay adapting a slower and more lyric approach while Van Beinum prefers to keep things moving at a slightly faster pace and with more vigorous accent. The real news here is the irresistibly beautiful account of the "Little C Major Symphony". The slightly accelerated definition of *Allegro moderato* in the final movement will offend certain tastes, but the resulting lightness and smiling gaiety more than justifies Van Beinum's pace.

Those of the Brahms variations in which the strings and woodwinds are utilized (Nos. 1,2,4,5,7, and 8) emerge with a good deal of finesse in Fricsay's reading. But the brass in general and horns in particular are not strong features of this ensemble. Variations 3 and 6 therefore leave something to be desired. Fricsay's presentation has a laudable élan, although it cannot be equated with the maturity and power of a Toscanini or Walter. Decca's miking is in good balance, but the sound tends to grow thick in the climaxes. —A.K.

•
SCHUMANN: *Cello Concerto in A minor, Op. 129*; **SAINT-SAËNS:** *Cello Concerto No. 1 in A minor, Op. 33*; Janos Starker (cello); Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Carlo Maria Giulini. Angel 35598, \$4.98 or \$3.98.

(Schumann)
Fournier..... Angel 35397
Casals..... Columbia ML-4926
(Saint-Saëns)
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sions of these two concertos. Starker plays with tremendous authority; his interpretations musically and technically are of the highest order. The orchestral support, too, is superb throughout, with plenty of fire and bite. Although other cellists may utilize a more obviously romantic approach, particularly in the Schumann, there are few versions which are so well integrated from the musical standpoint. Altogether this is a splendid recording which may be heartily recommended. —I.K.

SCHUMANN: *Waldscenen*, Op. 82;
SCHUBERT: *Moments musicaux*, Op. 94; Wilhelm Backhaus (piano). London LL-1725, \$3.98.

(Schumann) Richter Decca DL-9921
Haskil Epic LC-3358
(Schubert) Serkin Columbia ML-5153

▲THE dividends of maturity abound in this beguiling account of the *Waldscenen*. A master's subtlety and a poet's heart are more than apparent in the disarming simplicity of Backhaus' approach. For the piano student the performance offers a most valuable seminar in the subtleties of nuance and shading. At seventy-four, Backhaus' technique remains a marvel. One does not get quite the same feeling of identification from his concept of the six *Moments*, whose phrases ask for a greater over-all lyricism and more of a *portamento* than the detached staccato method used. Numbers one and two want more inner calm. London has solved most of the problems of piano reproduction with noteworthy clarity and realism. —A.K.

SIBELIUS: *Come away, death; When that I was a little tiny boy; Les trois Soeurs aveugles; Im Feld ein Mädchen singt; Lastu lainehilla; Illalle; Souda, souda sinisora Finlandia-Hymni; Drömmen; Varen flykter hastigt; Till Frigga; Flagellek; Romeo; Demanten på marssön; Säf, säf, susa; Svarta rosor; Kim Borg (basso) and Erik Werba (piano). Decca DL-9983, \$3.98.*

▲OF these fifteen songs seven (including the arrangement of the middle section of *Finlandia*) seem to be altogether new to

recording; and hardly anything on the program would be classified as well known. Five languages are represented. The two Shakespeare settings are curious. *Come away, death* will be remembered by old-timers who own Marion Anderson's 78 rpm disc, which contrasts amusingly with Kim Borg's presentation. In the Anderson version one is more conscious that the English text is stretched out of shape by Sibelius' melodic line; on the other hand, not unnaturally, the contralto is more obviously at home in the language and sings with a more telling intensity. Borg's diction is remarkably good, but somehow he does not seem quite to belong. The second song, with its suggestions of intoxication, is less subtle and fares better. Both Sibelius and Borg appear ill at ease in the little song supposed to be sung by Mélisande in Maeterlinck's drama. But from here on, both seem to grow in stature. The one German song gives the basso a chance to show how he can lighten his tone; then in Finnish and Swedish he really comes into his own. His *Illalle* is splendidly expressive; his *Säf, säf, susa* and *Svarta rosor* are impressively dramatic. One can hardly call Borg's voice a surpassingly beautiful one in itself, but his artistic use of it has often been admired. One feels that in those songs of his celebrated countryman that are set to the languages with which he grew up he is really on his mettle. —P.L.M.

STRAUSS, Johann Jr. & Joseph: *Entweder-oder—Polka schnell*, Op. 403 (Johann Jr.); *Dithyrambe—Polkamazurka*, Op. 236 (Johann Jr. & J. Weyl); *Moulinet—Polka française*, Op. 57 (Joseph); *Wein, Wein und Gesang*, Op. 333 (Johann Jr. & J. Weyl); *Auf Ferienreisen—Polka schnell*, Op. 133 (Joseph); *Sangerlust—Polka*, Op. 328 (Johann Jr. & J. Weyl); *Bei uns z'Haus—Waltz*, Op. 361 (Johann Jr. & Langer); *An der schönen blauen Donau—Waltz*, Op. 314 (Johann Jr. & Gernerth); *Men's Choral Society of Vienna; Vienna Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Karl Ettl and Eduard Strauss. Epic LC-3469, \$3.98.*

▲THE novelty and the attraction here lie in the combination of an excellent Viennese male chorus and an orchestra whose appropriateness to the music no one will question. *Wine, Women and Song* and *The Blue Danube* were both written to be sung, but opportunities to hear them in this way do not come too frequently. Delightful music "to relax by".

—P.L.M.

•
R. STRAUSS: *Alpine Symphony, Op. 64*; Saxon State Orchestra conducted by Karl Böhm. Decca DL-9970, \$3.98.

▲EVEN though Mitropoulos has conducted this work with considerably more persuasiveness than the present

interpreter manages, it remains to this taste a bloated (all this and an organ too) musical windbag. The familiar harmonic, instrumental, and rhythmic devices tend, by now, to sound like clichés. Even the wind machine had been utilized before in highly similar fashion. Böhm, for his part, does little to dispel the boredom. His answers to Strauss' requests for outspoken dynamics are repeatedly timid and lacking in contrapuntal differentiation until the storm scene. One would have thought it the fault of the rather low-level and muffled reproduction, but in the latter segment the orchestra does indeed raise its voice in welcome contrast to its modesty otherwise.

—A.K.

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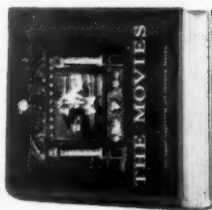
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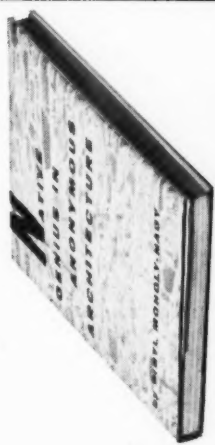
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Tchaikovsky by Cliburn: in every way exceptional

By RAFAEL KAMMERER

NOT SINCE the days of Louis Moreau Gottschalk has an American pianist created such a stir in the world as has Van Cliburn, aged twenty-three—the six-foot-four pride of Kilgore, Texas. No pianist in all history has been skyrocketed to stardom so quickly as he. Even Liszt, Anton Rubinstein, and Paderewski had to battle their way to the dizzy heights that Cliburn has been catapulted to overnight.

The closest analogy to such spectacular success was that of the phenomenally gifted boy prodigy, Josef Hofmann, although Gottschalk came pretty close to it at twenty-one. Once his prodigy days were over, however, Hofmann had a terrific struggle regaining his place in the pianistic firmament. Van Cliburn faces the opposite dilemma—how to keep from drowning in the floodtide of success that is sweeping him along. Being a remarkably level-headed young man as well as an exceptional pianist, he will no doubt manage to keep his artistic chin above the waters of commercialism now seeking to engulf him. Like Gottschalk, he is a pianist with a personality. Like Gottschalk also, by the way, he was born in Louisiana and inherited his love for music-making from his mother.

As to this eagerly awaited first commercial recording—the first, that is, to

be issued in this country—it is in every way exceptional. Only the captious could find anything to quibble about. Under the skillful Kondrashin's direction, the pick-up orchestra plays with a dedicated devotion that matches that of the soloist. This is not just another concerto performance in which the pianist shines while the orchestra furnishes the background. Tchaikovsky's old war horse emerges, for once, as a fine piece of music rather than a virtuoso's vehicle. There is plenty of spectacular virtuosity in Van Cliburn's playing, to be sure, but it is always subordinated to the musical values in the score. The sculptured, beautifully wrought phrasing of the slow movement is a case in point. Pianist and conductor achieve a give and take in their rubatos that is as easy, free, natural, and graceful as the swaying of leaves in a summer's breeze. The pianist sings and sears his way through this movement with a wonderful command of tonal nuance, while his handling of the pianistic roudades near the close are masterly and thrilling. In the corner

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Piano Concerto No. 1 in B flat minor Op. 23*; Van Cliburn (piano), and an unidentified orchestra conducted by Kiril Kondrashin. RCA Victor LM-2252, \$4.98.

movements, too, it is always the musical values brought out in this recording that are most impressive.

Although some of us had hoped that Cliburn's first recording would be a solo recital, the Tchaikovsky Concerto in the final analysis was the logical choice. He made his New York debut with the Philharmonic in November, 1954, playing this very work, and then he won the first International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow with it. Besides which, he seems to have a special flair for the piece that enables him to find beauties in it that other pianists have overlooked. He swings the climaxes à la Rachmaninoff.

As recordings of the Tchaikovsky Concerto go, this one need not take a back seat to any. On the contrary, it's right up front—the newest and the best. The

recording was made (after a false start at Manhattan Center) during a midnight-to-dawn session in historic Carnegie Hall, where the acoustics have a way of glorifying piano tone at the same time that they whittle away the extraneous sounds of the mechanism. The over-all sound is well balanced, and that of the piano itself is amazingly clear, bell-like, resonant, and singing—obviously a marvelous instrument.

Just about the time this recording was released, the good news spread that much-threatened Carnegie Hall was not to be torn down after all. That, too, is something to be thankful for. Incidentally, the Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto figured in the first concert ever given in that venerable auditorium back in 1891. The soloist was Adele Aus Der Ohe, and the composer himself conducted.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Symphony No. 4 in F minor, Op. 36*; Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Constantin Silvestri, Angel 35565, \$4.98 or \$3.98.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Symphony No. 6 in B minor, Op. 74*; Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Constantin Silvestri, Angel 35487, \$4.98 or \$3.98.

(No. 4)
Koussevitzky, Boston.....RCA Victor LM-1008
(No. 6)
Mitropoulos, N. Y. Phil.....Columbia ML-5235
Mravinsky, Leningrad.....Decca DXE-142

▲TO say that Silvestri's readings are notoriously at odds with the scores (the enumeration of blatant liberties taken in both symphonies completely covers two of my work sheets on both sides!) is to state the case mildly indeed. In this opinion, the conductor's vulgar, disdainful, and illogical distortion of the printed text is shockingly brazen and totally unacceptable. The performances receive reproductions of high quality, which they do not deserve. —A.K.

●
VIVALDI: *Concerto in D for Flute, Oboe, Violin, Bassoon, and Harpsichord*, "La Pastorella"; *Sonata in A minor for Flute, Bassoon, and Harpsichord*; *Concerto in G minor for Flute, Oboe, and Bassoon*; *Sonata in C minor for Oboe and Harpsichord*; *Concerto in F for Flute, Violin, Bassoon, and Harpsichord*;

Jean-Pierre Rampal (flute), Pierre Pierlot (oboe), Robert Gendre (violin), Paul Hongne (bassoon), Robert Veyron-Lacroix (harpsichord). Haydn Society HS-9014, \$4.98.

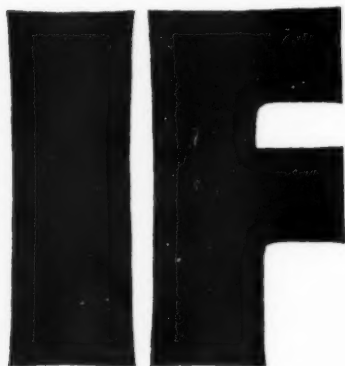
▲ONE cannot but continue to be amazed at the great variety of detail, albeit within an over-all pattern of stylistic uniformity, in Vivaldi's seemingly endless output. Instead of the more customary form of concerto, with soloist or soloists pitted against a *tutti*, the "concertos" in this program are in effect music for a concertino without a *tutti*, and are more in the nature of trio sonatas than either solo concertos or concerti grossi. But as Vivaldi did with both forms of the concerto, he approaches these quasi trio-sonatas set on contriving a constantly varied instrumental texture in each for the purpose, again, of exploiting different combinations of instrumental colors. The same is true of the A minor Sonata. Only the Oboe Sonata is anything like a "sonata" in the more conventional sense of the term. These French performances are virtuosic, elegant, and delectable. The only complaint is that a gamba or cello really ought to have been used with the harpsichord to fill out the basso continuo. (Indeed, for the words "and harpsichord" one should read "and

basso continuo" in the designations of all the concertos.) The only other complaint is not about the performers; it is that no reference is made to either of the two numerical catalogue systems of the composer's works (by Marc Pincherle and by Antonio Fanna). This, of course, does not diminish one's enjoyment of the music, but in an output so big and confusing as Vivaldi's these numbers are always useful. Reference to the Fanna thematic catalogue reveal they are, respectively, F.XII,29; F.XV,1; F.XII,4; (the fourth I could not locate); and F.XII,21. These complaints officially registered, let this disc then be recom-

mended wholeheartedly for some very delightful and satisfying, if unusual, Vivaldi.
—J.W.B.

VIVALDI-DART: *Concerto for Four Harpsichords and Orchestra in D minor*; **J. S. BACH:** *Concerto for Three Harpsichords and Orchestra in C*; **BACH-VIVALDI:** *Concerto for Four Harpsichords and Orchestra in A minor*; **MALCOLM:** *Variations on a Theme of Mozart for Four Harpsichords*; Eileen Joyce, Thurston Dart, George Malcolm, Denis Vaughan (harpsichords); Pro Arte Orchestra conducted by Boris Ord. Angel 45022 (Library Series), \$3.98.

▲NOT only are we given here first-class interpretations of the standard three- and four-harpsichord concertos (which usually make up a record by themselves), but also there is the attraction of two extra novelties. Thurston Dart has arranged Vivaldi's *Concerto Grosso No. 11 in D minor, Op. 3* as a concerto for four harpsichords, using as his model the Bach arrangement of the Vivaldi *Concerto* heard on this record. It is quite effective, if not entirely convincing in its different form. The real charmer on this disc, however, is the set of variations which George Malcolm wrote on the *Andante grazioso* from the Violin and Viola Duo in B flat, K. 424, by Mozart. It is not only well written, with tremendous ingenuity in which Malcolm fully exploits all the resources of his instruments, but also it is really delightful from a purely musical point of view. The style is Mozartian, the effect completely refreshing. The playing is nothing short of prodigious throughout. The ensemble (particularly in the transparent Malcolm Variations) is almost uncanny in its precision. Differences in registration and timbre come through better than in any other versions of the Bach and Bach-Vivaldi. From the musical side, too, the latter works are performed with uncommon sensitivity; more often than not they are merely banged out with little regard for dynamic shadings. Thurston Dart, incidentally, arranged a continuo part in the C major Bach *Concerto* which is played



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on the fourth harpsichord. This alone gives some idea of the degree of musicality to be found in these performances. The recording is splendidly clear; only stereophonic sound could possibly be an improvement, for it would give some directionality to the four instruments. Highly recommended. —I.K.

●
VIVALDI: *Concerto in G minor for Flute, Oboe, and Bassoon* (P. 402); **HAYDN:** *Divertimento in B flat for Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Horn, and Bassoon*; **MOZART:** *Cassation in E flat for Oboe, Clarinet, Horn, and Bassoon*; Paris Wind Ensemble. Epic LC-3461, \$3.98.

(Vivaldi)
Baron, Roth, Garfield.....Washington 402
(Haydn)
Philadelphia Woodwind Quintet....Columbia 5093
(Mozart)

New Art Wind Quartet.....Classic Ed. 2010
▲ALTHOUGH two of these three works are considered possibly not to be by the composers ascribed to them, the performances are so charming and so full of spirit that the listener cannot help thinking that the question of correct author-

ship is of secondary importance. The Haydn Divertimento is the one containing the St. Anthony Chorale which Brahms in turn used as the theme for his famous variations. The entire work, it has been suggested, is not by Haydn but by another composer of the period, perhaps Pleyel. The Cassation in E flat, supposedly by Mozart, was discovered in 1910 and published by Andraud in Cincinnati in 1936; it is not contained in the latest edition of the Köchel catalog. Although Mozartian in flavor, the style of writing in this very delightful work is sometimes closer to Beethoven or Cherubini. The Vivaldi, one realizes immediately upon listening, is pure Vivaldi. It was well performed in a recent Washington disc, but the present performance is as good if not a little better due to faster tempos and a more virtuosic approach. Virtuosity, in fact, is a keyword for the entire record, but this is not achieved at the expense of musicianship. The reproduction of the instruments is full and rich. —I.K.

(Continued from page 6)

Without belaboring these time-honored traditions of music journalism and trade journalism generally, suffice it to repeat that I would have no part of them when the time came for me to establish *The American Record Guide* as an absolutely independent journal dedicated solely to serving the interests and the welfare of its readers. If this "adventure in optimism" suggests to anyone that I had an extraordinary and even an irrational confidence in the integrity of mankind—in the willingness of the intelligent public to support an honest magazine of opinion—I must plead guilty.

The truth is that I was myself a collector of the sort I hoped to find thousands more of. That is to say, a collector in the truest and best sense of the term, and I feel that I must at once elucidate because this surely smacks of conceit. I will explain by citing one of my favorite "quotes", the author of which I do not recall just at the moment except that he was, I think, a French pedagogue. What he said, in effect, was

that collecting art is itself an art. Briefly, this is the philosophy I wanted to share, and was determined to spread as widely as possible.

It took four years at the beginning, and they were lean years insofar as trade support was concerned, to prove the worth of one man's sincere devotion in this philosophy. The day came when, in a conversation with an industry leader who confessed ignorance as to what the recordings public really wanted, I saw a way to justify my complete dedication to the needs and desires of ARG readers. Why not, I suggested, let me send questionnaires to ARG subscribers? He agreed, and in due time I was presented with eighteen questions that had been painstakingly prepared by this man (the chief executive of the largest record company in the field) in collaboration with the massed brains of his advertising agency.

I was not surprised when 57.6 per cent of my subscribers responded, but the industry was and so were the advertising men. Apparently I should have been content with a far smaller proportion of

returns. Instead I was rather annoyed that the figure was only slightly better than half. But the "big wheels" were absolutely delighted, and from that day forward there were doors opened to this magazine that had been firmly shut before we were able to tell the smart businessmen how their customers felt about such things as record changers, repertory, and sundry other matters of interest to all concerned.

The bombing of Pearl Harbor scored a figurative hit on the *ARG* because our advertisers promptly forsook us. Little did they know, and little could they believe it when we told them, that throughout the war our subscription lists averaged sixty per cent servicemen. Thousands of copies monthly went to the several theaters of operation. The advertisers could not imagine that the boys overseas could possibly be interested in records. How wrong these brilliant executives were! From all over the world, day in and day out, I received long, intense letters from collectors in uniform—privates and generals, gobs and admirals. The irresistible urge of the true collector somehow led these men to seek out records wherever they went, and in the latter months of the war more than a hundred of them shipped their purchases to the *ARG* offices for safekeeping. Thank God—every one of these subscribers came home unscathed and dropped by to pick up their treasures and express their gratitude for being able to read the magazine no matter where destiny took them.

Generally, these readers had been at pains to say that we were welcome to open any of the packages and play the contents as we wished. This privilege resulted in some wonderful grist for The Editor's mill, and no doubt it frustrated those stateside subscribers who were denied access to these rare items. In Japan, especially, *ARG* readers found many wonderful recordings (mostly of German origin) that had been absolutely unavailable here for many, many years. I remember the excitement that resulted after one of these readers shipped, and I was able to discuss at length, virtually all of the 1905-07 recordings by Lilli Lehman, the celebrated German soprano who died in 1929.

In closing let me once again approach a definition of the record collector—that special type of person for whom this magazine was founded. He is not a man, or a woman, whose interests in life or in art are narrow. Most of our subscribers, as I can testify from twenty-odd years of correspondence with them, are either true connoisseurs or they want to be, and it is part of our job to help the latter towards this goal. They want guidance; hence the very title of this magazine. But of course there are intangibles that are beyond our semantic reach, for it is not the exteriority of an art that really matters. Indeed, it is the high purpose of a critical journal to *bring* its readers to that area that is admittedly beyond the ken of written language. And the true collector is one who has achieved, or feels that he wants to achieve, not only pleasure or excitement but also some *spiritual* value from music. Even as I proceed I sense that I am getting into a realm where extra-sensory perception obtains and criticism is meaningless, but now that the atomic bomb has given us a closer affinity to the infinite perhaps it is not inappropriate to speak in this fashion.

If I may I would like to repeat a few words that appeared in these pages early in 1957. It was my distinguished successor Jim Lyons who wrote that "the listener's right to his own opinion is inherent in all evaluations offered by this journal. We do not pronounce judgments from on high. . . In this day of myriad musical delights it would be presumptuous of any critic to act as if he were his brother's keeper. It is enough to save the reader from the frequent dead ends and, in addition, to point out to him those high roads that are worth his attention. . . Only in this way can he hope to sharpen his sensitivities to the point (a consummation devoutly to be wished) at which a critic can be read as a friendly, objective, fair-minded fellow enthusiast, and not as an arbiter whose word must be taken as if it were Holy Writ." That does not, I fear, successfully define the genus record collector. But it rather succinctly defines the policy, and the permanence, of this monthly adventure in idealism.

(Continued from page 9)

DC-6's that were landing and taking off. Lima's Spanish streets with latticed balconies, the archaeological treasures in the museum, and the famous old church with Pizarro's remains intrigued those among us who were not too fatigued to investigate. Those who were merely browsed in front of the luxurious Hotel Bolívar and watched the passing throng. (Footnote: Women in Lima are gorgeous.)

Flying over the jagged Andes to La Paz, the pilot told us he would pass over the ruins of Machu Picchu, the most famous of the ancient Indian ruins. It was the thing I wanted most to see in all of South America. But we were up so high that, when the time came, we could see nothing more than a white speck way down below. That was my biggest disappointment.

BOLIVIA: Some of us were sick or had nosebleed from the altitude. But our chartered plane kept climbing over some grim-looking peaks. Then, suddenly, it glided down to a small windy plateau, thirteen thousand feet above sea level, and



A BASIC LIBRARY of New York Philharmonic recordings was presented to local educational and cultural organizations at each stop on the tour itinerary with the compliments of Columbia Records. President David M. Keiser of the Philharmonic, shown above with co-conductors Mitropoulos and Bernstein, made most of the actual presentations. Each comprised: Bernstein: "Age of Anxiety".....ML-4325
Handel: *Messiah*.....ML-242
Stravinsky: *Firebird Suite*;
Tchaikovsky: *Romeo and Juliet*.....ML-5182
Prokofiev: *Violin Concertos* (with Stern).....ML-5243
Bernstein: *Fancy Free*;
Copland: *El Salón México*.....CL-920
Berlioz: *Symphonie fantastique*.....ML-5188
Tchaikovsky: *"Pathétique" Symphony*.....ML-5235
Falla: *Nights in the Gardens of Spain* (with Casadesu); Excerpts from "La Vida Breve" and The Three-Cornered Hat.....ML-5172
Mendelssohn: "Scottish" and "Reformation" Symphonies.....ML-4864

we stepped out on the highest commercial airfield in the world. A "revolution" had erupted in Bolivia before our arrival (not over our arrival), and we could still hear firing. The field was dotted with wiry, tough-looking soldiers. Several hundreds of Indians, awaiting the return of their President, began to swarm toward us. Loudspeakers hastily informed the militia that we were only members of the New York Philharmonic—whatever that may have meant to them. Our normally sedentary dispositions, made more so by the gunshot and thin air, kept us indoors in our hotels for the rest of the day. We stayed under wraps; La Paz stayed under martial law. Our concert there turned into a demonstration of national fervor as the President of Bolivia entered his box and we struck up the Bolivian National anthem.

Because of the altitude, two oxygen tanks were stationed in the wings. Many of us availed ourselves of whiffs; the brass players, to our surprise, needed it less than some of the string players.

PARAGUAY: Asunción is a city in a jungle, far off the tourist track. There are no Indians, little money, not much in the way of historical sights. The men in the orchestra were disgruntled, tired, and on their worst behavior. This is where North American preoccupation with bathtub culture came out most clearly. The kindness of the citizens and the outspoken gratitude of the United States Ambassador soothed our lacerated feelings.

CHILE: Until now we had flown over the Andes with nonchalance, but the flight to Santiago shook our composure. We were casually informed that our flight would take us through a pass between two of the highest mountains in the world, and so it did. It was just here that Bernstein accepted the pilot's offer to take over the controls! One orchestra member expressed the sentiments of the rest of us: "Man, that mountain looks like a high G three octaves above the treble staff!"

Santiago is Mrs. Bernstein's home town and she was clearly proud to show her husband to the relatives and neighbors. There we bought vicuña cloth and Bartók and Kodály quartets, watched the Chilean



At left, Bernstein joins a delegation from the Lake Titicaca region in an after-concert "jam session" of Bolivian Indian music. At right, Mitropoulos investigates a suspiciously unauthentic-looking sculpture in Mexico City.



currency fall, and drank Chilean wine. I went into a music store to look for bargains and was startled by the hospitality of the proprietor, who promptly offered to lock the store: "You are from the Philharmonic? Where would you like me to take you?"

We later saw Valparaiso and Viña del Mar, in a delightful region that looks like the French Riviera.

ARGENTINA: In western Argentina, we stopped at the dusty, grape-growing center of Mendoza. On a bus there we saw a sign near the driver's seat which warned firmly: "It is forbidden to spit on the conductor." That one got a hearty laugh from conductor Bernstein.

In Buenos Aires, Dimitri Mitropoulos arrived to take over the orchestra. The first rehearsal with him included Schönberg's *Verklärte Nacht*, *Medea's Meditation* and *Dance of Vengeance* by Samuel Barber, and the Prokofiev Fifth. A tall, angular man, the Maestro conducts with passionate intensity and dedication. His memory for music is legendary, of course, but we were flabbergasted to hear that he had decided to learn Portuguese in anticipation of our arrival in Brazil.

A series of concerts at Buenos Aires' Teatro Colón, the largest opera house in the world, brought the ovations we had by now come to expect. Buenos Aires has a Parisian stamp and is easily the most cosmopolitan city in South America, although we were well aware of political uneasiness.

URUGUAY: I was amazed by the horses here. They graze all over the beaches and the fields, even in the empty lots of the city. They don't shoot old horses in Montevideo; they just let them

wander off to the lovely ocean front, which is dotted with palatial houses and stretches out for miles away from the city. Like most North Americans, we found Montevideo and its citizens congenial. In retrospect, I like it best of all.

BRAZIL: After a one-concert stop in Porto Alegre, we arrived in São Paulo. This was another boom town, with skyscrapers reminding us of Caracas.

The musicians of São Paulo treated us to a barbecue—really a native festival—that was one of the most memorable events in the trip. And it was in São Paulo that Mitropoulos demonstrated his versatile virtuosity by making a speech in what the next day's papers called flawless Portuguese!

We were deluged with a stream of literature from the local gem merchants, extolling the virtues of beryl, topaz, and aquamarine. Most of the musicians were too uncertain of values and too proud to take a chance on being rooked, so the stone merchants probably did not do a very good business with the Philharmonic.

An open-air concert in a small park, announced only the day before, drew a crowd of over 30,000 who cheered and almost mobbed Maestro Mitropoulos. It was touching to see the way they responded to music. Is it that music is much more vital to them than to us, or do they have a less inhibited reaction to everything? We couldn't be sure—except that, here and elsewhere, hundreds slept all night at box offices to be sure of a seat.

An hour's journey brought us to the harbor of Rio de Janeiro. The beauty of Sugar Loaf Mountain and Copacabana Beach made it inevitable that we would

settle down at the seashore for a short but much-needed rest. In spite of the kind invitations and our own wish to take advantage of this opportunity to see Rio, our weariness at this time was almost indescribable. The noise and bustle (and carelessness) of the traffic was amazing, even to those of us familiar with Seventh Avenue at 34th Street in rush hours. We were convinced that the safest place was on the Copacabana sand.

Here we could get a good steak sandwich, heaps of potatoes, delicious pastry, and fine coffee—all for forty-five cents!

An Embassy reception introduced us to Dr. Francesco Lange, the eminent musicologist whose research had uncovered many early South American works—some of which, by the way, could be profitably performed or recorded here.

MEXICO: It was a 24-hour flight from Rio to Mexico, with some tempers running short and most of us tired and anxious by then to get home. Nevertheless, our tempestuous reception at Mexico City gave us a second wind. A Mexican band with trumpets and violins, and crowds of girls in native costume, showered us with songs and roses and kisses. With our six weeks of experience behind us, we accepted and returned the kisses with a certain graciousness.

Mexico City is another sophisticated metropolis, and accustomed to modern music. Chávez' *Sinfonia India* went over big, naturally. This was one of several works by contemporary Latin composers in our tour repertoire.

Inured as we were to local demonstrations (friendly type), the hospitality of the

Mexicans overwhelmed us. We left the city in a torrent of good will, still tired, but happy to be heading for home.

Incidentally, it was in Mexico City—for the first time in 15,000 miles—that I saw the imperturbable George Judd (associate manager of the Philharmonic) get even momentarily ruffled. At the time he was selecting last-minute gifts for his children.

NEW YORK: First impressions: The water was good to drink; the women looked very pretty—and furthermore we could communicate with them. We were met by the band of the New York Department of Sanitation, a stand-in for the mayor, and where were the flowers? Mitropoulos made one of his marvelously indiscreet speeches—in English.

SUMMING UP: The purpose of our trip was to create good will for our country in Latin America. It can be stated that we far exceeded our expectations. At one point we thought: "These concerts are getting only to the people who can afford expensive tickets—just a few thousands in each city." But after a while we began playing extra outdoor concerts so that we could play to more people in one evening than we had been able to reach in a week of playing in concert halls. Also, most of our concerts were broadcast, and many of them televised.

For our part, we were pleased and rewarded by the friendliness, generosity, and love of art prevalent among our southern neighbors. *Viva* more cultural tours and better understanding of South America!

PHOTO CREDITS: Hamilton Wright, Peter Anderson (Black Star), New York Philharmonic, Columbia Records, Max Serbin

At left, the author (foreground) and deskmates relaxing at La Paz. At right, Chavez and the maestri at a pinata party.



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W12

Dozens of stereodiscs came in just too late for this issue. Henceforth all LPs, stereo and monaural, will be reviewed together.—Ed.

Stereodisc Reviews

EVERY company seems obliged to produce a record designed to show just how good stereo sounds on its products. Of the four received herewith, three are partially or completely demonstration discs rather than samplers. The London, RCA, and Capitol feature a narrator with musical and sound (i.e., non-musical) examples. On the Vox, only two bands on the first side are devoted to sound effects; the remainder is a grouping of selections that are complete at least to the extent of being whole movements. In attempting to evaluate these releases I considered their sonic qualities, stereo effectiveness, and general interest to be of more or less equal importance. In order of preference, then:

London's "Journey" is composed entirely of excerpts and selections tied together by a narrator. It opens with the sound of a steam locomotive racing from one side to the other. (Every record except the Vox has a train sequence.) After a portion of Chabrier's *España* and several assorted effects, we eavesdrop on an Ansermet rehearsal in which the conductor is preparing his orchestra for a take of Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*. The next band gives us the take as recorded. Then we find ourselves trackside at a Grand Prix motor race. (Every record including the Vox contains racing cars.) The first side ends with an actual recording of the "Ceremony of the Keys", in which the keys to London Tower are turned over to the relieving guard. This delightful

few minutes alone makes this record worth its price. Side two is devoted to somewhat longer samplings from London's stereo catalogue. The sound has that fullness we have come to expect from London. Stereo separation is excellent. The entire production is in very good taste.

Next on my list is Capitol's "The Stereo Disc", with Art Gilmore narrating side one. Here the same sounds are played first monaurally and then in stereo. This well-designed production rather dramatically demonstrates the sweep of stereo. Also to be found on side one is a balancing track that features the sound of clicking castanets recorded dead center, between the two microphones. Playback balance should be adjusted until the sound seems to be coming from exactly midway between the two speakers. The second side is devoted to selections from Capitol's ample catalogue. Sound is clean and natural, but the channel separation per se is only fair. Material which was supposed to be only on one channel was all too clearly heard on both. Still, this record is not far below the London in over-all effect and does have much to recommend it.

The Vox "Stereovox Sampler" has a rather 'corny' opening, comprising the opening chorus of the final movement of the Dvořák "New World" Symphony. These in turn cross-fade to a cheering group chanting the word "stereo", which swings from right to left and finally emerges in unison. After several other sounds we hear a recording of a civil defense test, made in New York City. I had to turn down the volume for fear of creating a panic. The rest of side one is devoted (except for the sports cars) to complete selections or movements of major works. Side two comprises the dances from Smetana's "The Bartered

The Stereo Disc. Capitol Stereo SWAL-9032, \$6.98.

A Journey into Stereo Sound. London PS-100, \$4.98.

Sounds in Space. RCA Victor SP-33-13. (Free with stereo instruments.)

Stereovox Sampler. Stereovox VST-1, \$2.98.

Bride". Stereo channel separation on this disc is excellent, probably the best of the four. The recording is marred, however, by a rather dull sound indicative of limited frequency response. I trotted out some of my Phonotapes copies of the Vox masters and A-B tested. The disc's considerable high-frequency loss was readily apparent. I have not yet heard any subsequent Vox stereo discs, so I cannot report whether or not Vox's engineers (in co-operation with Fairchild Recording Co., which developed the cutter used) have come closer to solving this problem.

Finally, RCA Victor's "Sounds in Space". This record has the best production and is generally the most entertaining of the four records. The inevitable trains and cars are cleverly interwoven with music and stereo tricks. Of special merit is Ken Nordine's fine narration. Side two is devoted to excerpts from the *Rite*, the second movement of the Franck Symphony, Beethoven's Seventh, and a complete performance of Tchaikovsky's *Marche slave*. Stereo separation is good, but the distortion level is very high. The entire top end of the record shatters with the slightest provocation. Indeed, even the "s" sounds of the narrator were slurred. A second copy proved no better. I should point out that later RCA Stereo releases I have heard seem to confine this distortion to respectable limits.

It is evident that stereo records are going through birth pains much as the LP did in the late forties. Just as evidently, however, the maturation period will be much shorter for the stereo disc.

—L.Z.

•
BOCCHERINI: *Cello Concerto in B flat*;

VIVALDI: *Cello Concerto in E minor and A minor*; Aldo Parisot (cello); Baltimore Conservatory Orchestra conducted by Reginald Stewart. Counterpoint "Compatible Stereo" CPT-555, \$4.98.

▲PARISOT'S temperament banishes any fantasy from his playing of the well-known Boccherini work. So often the music is victimized by a performer's desire to proclaim the purely technical

aspects of which he is master—Parisot shows absolute technical firmness and also sensitive spiritual-emotional expression. Stewart fills in the background with no extramusical involvements. The Vivaldi pair are a different story, but only because of Luigi Dallapiccola's rewrites, which cause one to think that a musical court should be established. Possibly because of his free use of Tartini themes in a divertimento composed for the Koussevitzky Music Foundation, entitled *Tartiniana*, Dallapiccola has used a very strong pencil indeed on the Vivaldi originals. The original *Sonates en Concert* become drafts of oblivion, and the new "Concerti" fictitious products. For the Vivaldis really required only realization of the figured bass. Together with the enchanting melodic lines they vibrate long in the memory. (I recall the ideal edition made by Vincent d'Indy.) The sound of this recording, which "may be played on any LP Phonograph or on Stereophonic Disc Playback Equipment", is good—this reviewer heard it both ways. In both instances, however, the weight between orchestra and soloist in the Vivaldi had some moments of peculiar imbalance.

—A.C.

•
BRAHMS: *Symphony No. 1 in C minor*, Op. 68; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Rafael Kubelik. London Stereo CS-6016, \$4.98.

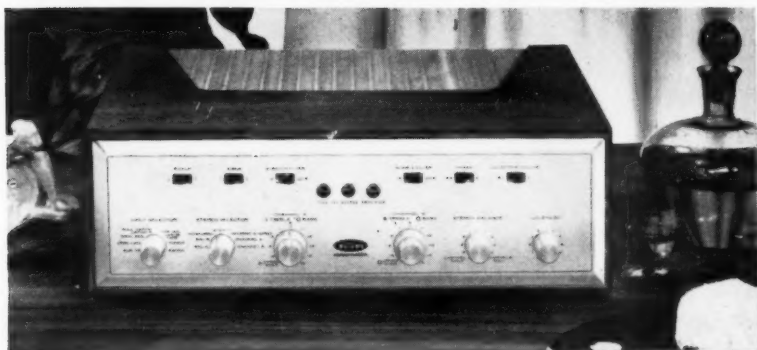
▲THERE is a certain lack of flexibility in evidence. As a result I personally found this performance rather stuffy and unexciting, although it is solid enough. The sound is good, but it is rather too strained and rough in spots to be excellent. The stereo effect is apparent to a modest degree only.

—P.C.P.

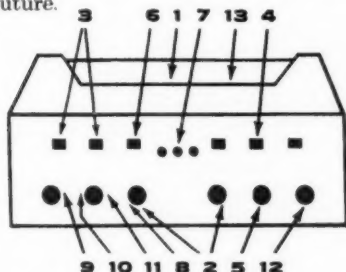
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BRITTEN: *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*; **DOHNÁNYI:** *Variations on a Nursery Tune*; Victor Aller (piano—in the Dohnányi); Concert Arts Orchestra conducted by Felix Slatkin. Capitol Stereo SP-8373, \$5.98.

▲THIS pair of thoroughly satisfying performances is the same as that appearing on Capitol Stereo Tape ZF-23, reviewed by J. L. in the March ARG. While the

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tape was reported to have sound that "hardly could be improved", the sonics of this stereo disc transfer leave much to be desired. Besides some high-frequency coloration here and there that borders on plain and simple distortion, and a low recorded level that just about stretched my relatively high-gain system to the hilt, my pre-release copy had excessively noisy surfaces, especially on the Britten side. The stereo effects are ones more of roundness and fullness than of clarity and directionality. In brief, the disc is a poor echo of its tape counterpart, although in subsequent pressings these "bugs" may be eliminated.

—P.C.P.

●
GERSHWIN: *Rhapsody in Blue*; *An American in Paris*; Reid Nibley (piano) with the Utah Symphony conducted by Maurice Abravanel. Westminster Stereo WST-14002, \$5.98.

▲EARLIER this year, reviewing the monaural version, our E. J. confessed that he had been quite won over by these performances and that he had been enchanted by their sound in particular (the *Rhapsody* calls for a banjo, and here it is). Now that the stereo counterpart is available for comparison one is left to decide only how best to second another's endorsement. The separation is wonderfully clean, the balance ideal.

—J. L.

●
LEHÁR: *A Musical Portrait in Hi-Fi* (Excerpts from "Viennese Women", "Der Rastelbinder", "Der Göttergatte", "Merry Widow", "Das Fuerstenkind", "Count of Luxemburg", "Gypsy Love", "Eva," "Where the Lark Sings", "Frasquita", "Paganini", "The Tsarevitch", "Friederike", and "Land of Smiles"); Victor Hruby and his Viennese Orchestra. Stereovox ST-VX 25.560, \$4.98.

▲THERE is not much I can say about this recording that is favorable. The performances are heavy-handed and thoroughly uncharming; the sound is thick and muddy—I've heard far clearer and cleaner on monaural pressings. However, in contrast to many stereodiscs, whose weak-voicedness makes for problems of noise, hum, etc., in playback, the recorded level here is quite high.

—P.C.P.

MENDELSSOHN: *Violin Concerto in E minor, Op. 64*; **BRUCH:** *Violin Concerto No. 1 in G minor, Op. 26*; Ruggiero Ricci (violin), London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierino Gamba. London Stereo CS-6010, \$4.98.

▲THESE readings, originally coupled on monaural disc LL-1684, were included in the ARG's listing of Best Recordings of 1957, and justifiably so: Ricci is, as I.K. states in his December review, "at the top of his form". The sound here is generally good—not all that could be expected of a stereo tape, perhaps, but full and spacious and with a marvelous sense of presence nevertheless. The violin stays nicely put in more or less dead center; there is little of the "wandering" that has been noticed in some recent releases.

—P.C.P.

●
MENDELSSOHN: *String Quartet in E flat*; **GLINKA:** *String Quartet in F*; Westwood String Quartet (Louis Kaufman, 1st violin; Joseph Stepansky, 2nd violin; Louis Kievman, viola; George Neikrug, cello). Society for Forgotten Music (Contemporary) SFM-1001, \$4.98, or Stereo S-7006, \$5.98.

▲SEVERAL years ago the Society for Forgotten Music began its operations in New York City, having been founded in Paris by Vernon Duke (né Vladimir Dukelsky). This reviewer recalls Duke's enthusiasm and the excellent work that he and his colleagues accomplished. It was a matter of regret when the annual series ceased. But it is not nostalgia that prompts me say that all of us are in debt to Vernon Duke for resuming his explorations, especially if succeeding releases are to be as stimulating and successful as this one. The Glinka work will surprise any chamber-music fan. His contribution to Russian chamber music is so slight that he is always passed by. But this recording reveals a little gem, of classic style rather than Russian. Though the patterns of German models are visible, the music is of beautiful finish, wrought in non-discursive language. It is beautifully performed, and the sound is superb. Mendelssohn's early quartet (1879) is not so unknown as Duke states in his other-



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wise excellent liner notes. The encyclopedist Wilhelm Altmann proclaimed it worthless, but the harmonic shifts show the romantic liquidity pertaining to the vertical aspects of music; the long lines and the distinctly interesting fugue would do credit to any composer. In the case of a fourteen year old, it is *Wunderkind* magic. Here, too, the Westwood String Quartet demonstrates chamber-music playing at its best, and the sound is again excellent. This is a record well worth owning.

—A.C.

RAVEL: *Piano Concerto in G*; **RACHMANINOFF:** *Piano Concerto No. 4 in G minor*; *Op. 40*; Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli (piano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Ettore Gracis. Angel Stereo S-35567, \$5.98.

▲THIS coupling is reviewed at length on page 47. The corresponding stereodisc offers similarly clean, crisp sound and fine separation. Also gratifying are the excellent dynamic range and the quiet surfaces.

—L.Z.

Strauss Sparkles in Hi-Fi: *Champagne Polka, Wo die Zitronen blühen, O schöner Mai, Tik-Tak Polka, Egyptian March, Waldmeister Overture, Freut euch des Lebens, Bei uns z'Hause, Leichtes Blut, Kuss-Walzer, Elektrophor Polka*; Vienna Philharmonica Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hans Hagen. Urania Stereo USD-1003, \$4.98.

▲STRAUSS does indeed sparkle here. The performances could hardly be better—pure joy reigns over all. The players obviously had a whale of a time making this recording, and the same is in store for those *Gemütlichkeit*-loving souls who listen to it. The pieces contained in this collection are relatively unfamiliar and quite refreshing. Although stereo is not apparent insofar as one's ability to place specific instruments in specific locations is concerned, stereo's bigness and clarity is present to a marked degree. In general, this is one of the better stereo discs, engineering-wise. The sound is not so effortless as that of tape, but colorations and harshness are at a minimum. —P.C.P.

STRAVINSKY: *Firebird Suite* (1919 version); *Song of the Nightingale*; Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Lorin Maazel. Decca DL-9978, \$3.98, or Stereo DL-79978, \$4.98.

(*Firebird Suite*)
Guilini, Phil. Orch. Angel 35462
Stokowski RCA Victor LM-9029
(*Song of the Nightingale*)
Reiner, Chicago Sym. RCA Victor LM-2150
Ansermet, Suisse Romande London LL-1494

▲MAAZEL displays a greater command of and insight into the intricate writing of the *Chant du Rossignol* than into the seemingly more accessible *Firebird Suite*, though his grasp of the former is still short of the level attained by Ansermet and Reiner. Lacking a unified and cohesive idea of structural and dramatic values, the young American provides little to kindle the imagination in the ballet music. Moreover, he is not above liberties in his presentation, particularly in the finale. The *Nightingale* has the superior reproduction, though neither side is an example of today's best. Both, naturally, are more impressive stereophonically. —A.K.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Violin Concerto in D, Op. 35*; Campoli (violin), London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ataulfo Argenta. London Stereo CS-6011, \$4.98.

▲ON stereo as on LP (September, 1957 issue), this performance can hardly be recommended; Campoli's playing is uneven, and his tone far from winning. The sound is quite adequate, although the solo violin did appear to wander from side to side at times. —P.C.P.

VIVALDI: *Le Quattro Stagioni* (The Four Seasons); I Solisti di Zagreb conducted by Antonio Janigro. Vanguard/Bach Guild Stereo BGS-5001, \$5.98.

▲DIRECTIONALITY is a subtle business in this kind of repertory. The weight of a bow, the unavoidable tendency of strings to "cover" each other in the perspective of monaural listening—such things are quickly exposed by stereo. As you might expect, Janigro's crack musicians pass all the tests, just as they did under less detailed scrutiny in the first place. Their collective tone is not so lush as one might wish, but that is not the fault of the recording engineer. —J.L.

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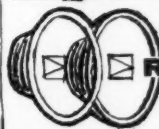
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The American Record Guide

Stereo Tape Reviews

Stereo Starter Set: The Sorkin Strings, Mike Simpson and his Big Band, Jay Norman Quintet with Vocalist Nancy Wright, Musical Arts Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leonard Sorkin. Concertapes Stereo SP-1, \$19.95.

▲THIS neat little package of four five-inch tapes is a broadside barrage of stereo show-off material. The four "Volumes" of this set are named, in order: *Silk, Satin and Strings*; *Big Beat with Mike*; *Lighting the Torch*; and *Symphony of Dance*. As one might guess from these titles, the music contained is, in turn, saccharine and slithery, raucous and lease-breaking, watery and cocktail-partyish, and, finally, rather routine, with similar adjectives applying to the respective performances. For demonstration purposes I suppose this potpourri is grand—just the sort of thing to throw at some unsuspecting guest, prefaced by the remark: "This is what my new stereo hi-fi rig sounds like". Despite its musical weaknesses, this set of tapes exhibits sound that is just about beyond reproach. Cleanliness and clarity, a complete lack of high frequency edginess, and a marvelous stereo liveness and instrument-placement are consistent throughout the four tapes. Mention should be made of the deplorable lack of program notes for this set. There is little more than a listing of the contents—which, in one instance, even inverts the order of Sibelius' *Valse Triste* and Rimsky-Korsakov's *Dance of the Clowns* from that actually on the tape—and a lukewarm advertising blurb on the back of each tape carton.

—P.C.P.

■
BARBER: *Medea's Meditation and Dance of Vengeance*: Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles Munch. RCA Victor Stereo ACS-147, \$6.95.

▲**BRAVOS** all around for this stunning stereo taping. Munch and his Bostonians have really outdone themselves in Barber's forbiddingly-titled but marvelous piece.

This performance fairly crackles: taut, tense, angular, with every rhythm hammered, every climax a veritable explosion. Soundwise this is just about the best stereo tape I've ever heard. Over-all balance is excellent; individual instruments stand out clearly and are easily located in space; false colorations—edginess, etc.—are non-existent, and an unusually wide dynamic range has been captured by Victor's engineers. The program notes by Herbert Weinstock are intelligent and concise.

—P.C.P.

●
BEETHOVEN: Four Great Overtures: *Egmont, Op. 84*; *Coriolan, Op. 62*; *Fidelio, Op. 72c*; *Leonore No. 3, Op. 72b*; Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra of London conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. Vanguard Stereo VRT-3021, \$11.95.

▲**BOULT** treats these four old friends with tender love and care. Intensity is present but seems subdued, while the more lyrical aspects of the scores are exploited at every opportunity. The result is a set of thoroughly gentlemanly performances. While this sort of approach might be looked upon with disfavor by those who prefer their Beethoven more passionate than poetic, I find myself heartily in accord with it. I enjoyed this tape immensely, as will, I am sure, other like-minded souls. The sound is excellent, never calling attention to itself, but always serving the best interests of the music—I'd call it unobtrusively spectacular.

—P.C.P.

●
BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 2 in D, Op. 36, Egmont Overture*; Graz Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Miltiades Caridis. Livingston Stereo 4003 K, \$17.95.

▲**CARIDIS'** readings are unobjectionable. He chooses a middle-of-the-road approach, neither excessively impassioned nor overly tender. Because of this neutrality, however, these performances are

not particularly interesting—a general grayness of spirit prevails. No complaint can be found with the engineering. The sound is effortless and smooth, with the amazing clarity of good stereo present at all times. —P.C.P.

•
BRAHMS: *Variations on a Theme by Haydn, Op. 56a*; London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. Mercury Stereo MVS-25, \$7.95.

▲**COARSENESS**, both musical and sonic, is manifest in this recording. Dorati's generally plodding, rather cautious performance is accurately reported by A.K. in his review of the disc version in the April ARG. This was my first encounter with Mercury's much-touted new stereo recording technique, an encounter which left me with mixed feelings. The center "third channel" of which Mercury so loudly boasts is indeed present; the result is an unbroken, impressive wall of sound. Bass is rock-solid and clean, some of the best I've heard. Highs, however—particularly the upper strings—are consistently and annoyingly harsh. This irritating quality long has been, and still is, unfortunately, very much evident in a great deal of what claims to be "super hi-fi"; I was frankly surprised and disappointed to find it here. —P.C.P.

•
KHACHATURIAN: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra*; Leonard Pennario (piano) with the Concert Arts Orchestra conducted by Felix Slatkin. Capitol Stereo ZF-52, \$14.95

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Piano Concerto No. 1 in B flat minor, Op. 23*; Leonard Pennario (piano) with the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. Capitol Stereo ZF-40, \$14.95.

▲**THESE** performances again reveal Pennario as a sure-fingered, hard-fingered pianist with an energetic, intense musical personality. This personality does not serve the best interests of the Tchaikovsky concerto here: the playing is rather matter-of-fact — a let's-get-it-over-with-quickly sort of reading — with slightly rushed tempi in spots and a general lack of flexibility and warmth. The Khacha-

turian, on the other hand is really quite, exciting; rhythmically sharp-chiseled, tense, and hard-driving. The sound in both is excellent, the Tchaikovsky having been recorded at a moderate distance and the Khachaturian somewhat closer in. In both recordings the effectiveness of stereo is manifest, with the piano nicely focused slightly to the right of center. —P.C.P.

•
PROKOFIEV: *Lieutenant Kijé*; Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. RCA Victor Stereo BCS-96, \$8.95.

▲**ONE** can hardly do much other than rave about tapes such as this. As A.K. suggests in his July ARG review of the disc, it is a little on the humorless side, but I really can't quibble about the performance here. The sound is marvelous, recorded close-in with a stereo bigness that will set the hi-fi-er's blood a-boiling. —P.C.P.

•
TCHAIKOVSKY: *Capriccio Italien*; Graz Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Gustav Cerny. Livingston Stereo 2016-C, \$6.95.

▲**THIS** is just about the dulllest performance of this work I've ever heard. By comparison, the lethargic Scherchen version is positively exciting. The lifeless playing strips all the humor and good spirits from the score—a simple case of "tired blood", à la the TV ad. The sound, especially the string sound, is on the dead side, although clean and with excellent stereo spread and clarity. —P.C.P.

•
Voices From Vienna, Volume 2—J. Strauss: *Roses of the South*; Schubert: *The Linden Tree*; Mozart: *Ave Verum*; Beethoven: *Nature Sings God's Honor*; Lehner: *I Love You, My Vienna*; Young Vienna Choir and an orchestra conducted by Leo Lehner. Audio-sphere Stereo 707-BN, \$11.95.

▲**SO-SO** performances of a rather ill-assorted potpourri. The choir sings exuberantly, perhaps boisterously, but it all strikes me as being somewhat forced. Sudden sharp crescendi and diminuendi simply swoop down on the unsuspecting

listener in a way that might be tolerable in the Strauss and Lehner pieces but is positively ghastly in such things as the *Ave Verum*. The sound is clean although lackluster—a little on the dead side, even in stereo. The recording machinery was unforgivably turned off too soon at the ends of two of the selections: the end of the Beethoven piece has every bit of its reverberation clipped off while the last chord of the Lehner piece simply collapses in the middle. This sort of thing isn't even amateurish. —P.C.P.

A Mighty Fortress: *A Mighty Fortress, Fairest Lord Jesus, Prayer of Thanksgiving, All People That On Earth Do Dwell, All Creatures Of Our God And King*; Robert Shaw Chorale conducted by Robert Shaw; Thomas Dunn, Organist. RCA Victor Stereo ACS-107, \$6.95.

▲ THIS collection of five familiar hymns is the sound of many a long-suffering church organist's fondest dreams—Oh, to have a congregation and choir sing hymns like this on a Sunday morning! Simplicity, directness, utter guilelessness is the keynote of both the arrangements (by Shaw and Alice Parker) and the performances here; the result is completely tasteful and appropriate. With so much in the way of souped-up, slopped-up hymn settings being heard these days, these performances are really quite refreshing. Although the sound is clean and well-balanced, stereo effects are almost non-existent. I could detect no significant difference in the sound of the choir as I switched instantaneously from stereo playback to a playback mode consisting of the upper tape track alone fed through both amplifier-speaker channels. A slight difference was noticed in the quality of the organ sound, but, because of the quite subordinate role the organ plays here, this difference is minor and barely detectable. A logical explanation is offered by the note on the tape carton: Shaw breaks his choir down into quartets and spaces his singers far apart. This, of course, would tend to eliminate any sopranos-on-the-left, altos-on-the-right, etc. effects in the recording. —P.C.P.

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The month's jazz

By MARTIN WILLIAMS

Cleveland Style: *Jimmy Cleveland*. Em-Arcy MG-36126, \$3.98.

▲THE five scores for septet here suggest that the "cool" style has temporarily found its way back east after years on the west coast and got hardened up a bit in the process. On the whole, "capable" might best describe what happens both in score and solo, but there are two exceptions: pianist Wynton Kelly, who provides purpose and direction in some places where they seem badly needed, and trumpeter Art Farmer, who, it becomes increasingly obvious, is a soloist of outstanding consistency, originality, and balance of form—the kind of musician whose work makes improvisation in jazz not only meaningful but, one might say, even re-establishes it as essential.

●
Louis Armstrong: *Collectors' Items*. Decca DL-8327, \$3.98.

▲TRULY a strange mélange in which outright hokum vocals like *Brother Bill*, the pseudo-spiritual *Shadrack*, etc., are placed alongside some of Armstrong's best "middle period" recordings. Among the latter are a brilliant rhythmic-metric exploration of *Jeepers Creepers*, a celebrated *I Can't Give You Anything But Love* (probably the Armstrong record of the middle thirties), and a fine (if grandstand) chorus on *Confessin'*.

●
A Portrait of Pee Wee Russell. Counterpoint Stereo CPST-562, \$4.98.

▲RUSSELL is the kind of improviser whose willingness to take chances and to explore is balanced by an almost classic gift for melody, of which his solo here on *Out of Nowhere* gives a good example. Any discussion of his instrumental technique is beside the point: he is thoroughly musical in the true meaning of that word. The spare scores acknowledge that rhythmic variety is not his forte, and that a real musical bravery is. Nor do such men as Vic Dickenson or Bud Freeman, also present, rest on past achievements or resort to the safety of

clichés. This is a "compatible" stereo record which, on my monaural equipment, comes out with a great deal of treble.

●
Hampton Hawes: *All Night Session*, Vols. 1-3. Contemporary C-3545/7, \$4.98 each.

▲HAWES had been playing a capable but basically conventional modern jazz piano on the West Coast until, in the late fifties, a series for this label (C-3505 and especially C-3515) showed a man apparently finding his voice in part in an exciting elaboration of the "funky" blues-and-gospel-based style of Horace Silver. On this series, he somehow makes almost unassimilated references to almost every pianist of the last fifteen years, but plays most of the time in the highly rhythmic but eclectic and fragmentary manner of Oscar Peterson. A reviewer's advice to a company is gratuitous, but to preserve all of this on three records is to give unevenness a strong sanction.

●
For Basie. Prestige 7127, \$4.98.

▲THIS is a quintet re-creation of five riff things from the Basie book of the late thirties. Pianist Nat Pierce, who provided appropriately understated arrangements, plays often without Basie's swinging time or subtle rhythmic and accental resources and thus makes a style that is meaningfully lean sound almost bare—and it may be his fault that, say, *Digging For Dex* plods rhythmically. On tenor, Paul Quinichette plays an increasingly eccentric version of Lester Young. For the others there is authenticity and stature: guitarist Freddie Green, bassist Walter Page, drummer Jo Jones—and trumpeter Shad Collins, who has done little recording but who plays here with sureness, ease, and witty turns that easily make this record his.

●
The Best of Muddy Watters. Chess LP-1427, \$3.98. **The Best of Little Walter.** Chess LP-1428, \$3.98.

▲OBVIOUSLY (and happily) the "basic" blues is a medium still very much alive

and performed without "rock'n'roll" gimmickry. Walter's is the urban, jump-band style and his record includes some instrumentals led by his harmonica. Watters' version is the country version—more imaginatively poetic and emotionally generous. He plays guitar in self-accompaniment in a completely a-harmonic conception and it is fascinating to hear elementary harmonies either present or evolving among the other strings behind him. Under the scrutiny of an examination in strict Western terminology the blues will almost disappear and yet, on the level here illustrated alone, it is capable of a striking variety of verse, melody, mood tempo, rhythm, form—and of art.

•
Jazz Giants '58 (Stan Getz, Gerry Mulligan, Harry Edison, Ray Brown, Oscar Peterson). Verve MG-8248, \$4.98.

▲THE previous edition (1956, Norgren MGN-1056) had excellent work by Teddy Wilson (*Gigantic Blues*), good playing by Roy Eldridge, Vic Dickenson, and some of the best recently by the often enervated Lester Young. I doubt if any of the men involved here (except possibly bassist Brown) deserve the status of "giant" as clearly as the men on the previous record. At any rate, despite a lively blues (called *Chocolate Sundae*—a title I'd rather not interpret) and some real creativity (in Getz's first solo, from Edison and in a polyphonic final chorus) on *When Your Lover Has Gone*, the record caught average work from these men.

•
The Metronome All Stars 1939, '41, '46, '49. RCA Camden CAL-426, \$1.98.

The Metronome All Stars 1940, '42, '47, '50. Harmony HL-7044, \$1.98.

▲IN one sense these collections by magazine poll winners, runners-up, and available near runners-up belong with the curiosities of recorded jazz. There are more or less obvious questions at the outset: What are James and Elman doing there in years when Armstrong and Eldridge were playing so well? What are Tex Beneke, Alvino Ray, etc., doing in there at all? How did that Saturday night cotillion drumming of Krupa's ever pass for the best around? At the same time, there is evidence of a decreasing cultural lag here and there. We begin with Goodman-esque restatements of arrangements Fletcher Henderson had done years before, played by "swing band" stars, then pass through some 1946 Ellington and Sy Oliver scores which merely rehash effects they had each used in their great periods of the late thirties, don't catch up to Johnny Hodges until '47, never

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do get, say, Lester Young. However, we get Teagarden on the first date, Charlie Christian in '40 and '41 (before it was too late), and by '48 are involved with Parker, Gillespie, etc. At the same time, an increasing modishness catches Miles Davis in '48 before he had matured, and leads to such things as Dizzy Gillespie flashing through (incongruously but strangely effectively, too) in the 1950 date largely dominated by Tristano, his sometimes doodling scores and some of his pupils. The Camden set is less uneven (and has interesting alternate versions for 1949). The 1947 date, by the way, came very close to slickness, with vocals by King Cole, Sinatra, and June Christie.

•
Great Blues Singers: *Ma Rainey, Ida Cox, Sarah Martin, Bessie Smith, Tricie Smith, Mary Johnson, Hociel Thomas, Chippie Hill.* Riverside RLP-12-121, \$4.98.

▲NOT all great, to be sure, but, in their different ways, Ma Rainey and Bessie Smith certainly qualify, a performance like Martin's *Death Sting Me* does, and even the couple who were only following the fashion of the middle twenties for urban blues that the set reflects did their

work with honesty, and helped to show the wide poetic and emotional variety possible in an art that was and is both formal and free, slight in structure and capable of complexity, rigid and open. The often splendid accompaniments include Tommy Ladnier, King Oliver, Lee Collins—even a slide whistle on one track somehow works unobtrusively. Recording quality ranges from 1929 movie track (Bessie Smith) through twenties acoustical and electric to mid-forties medium fi (Thomas and Hill).

•
Juanita Hall Sings the Blues. Counterpoint Stereo CPST-556, \$4.98.

▲IN several respects this is the best of the Bessie Smith "re-creations", and not the least of them is superior accompaniments individually and in scoring. Miss Hall sings very close to Bessie's idiom, both out of love of her material and a similar background, but she does have an edge of vaudeville bravura that Bessie Smith's honest art did not.

•
Ella Fitzgerald. Decca DL-8698, \$3.98.

▲THESE reissues give a typical cross-section of the kind of work Miss Fitzgerald did for this label; that is, the set is uneven and the unevenness is due mostly to spotty material. However, a tongue-in-cheek *Contribution to the Blues*, a worthy "ballad" in *My One and Only Love*, a rousingly improvisational *Blue Lou*, and a subdued and very effective version of Arlen's *World on a String* are present. And even the worst tune often cannot hide such a fine and imaginative musicianship—and a genuine artistic capacity to involve us with her as she sings.

•
Critics' Choice: Pepper Adams. World Pacific PJM-407, \$3.98. **10 to 4 at the Five Spot: Pepper Adams.** Riverside RLP 12-265, \$4.98.

▲ADAMS is, first, probably as close to a virtuoso of baritone saxophone as there is. Like that of several other saxists (who have probably gained attention in part through a fashionable reaction to cool jazz) his style seeks to achieve the most immediate kind of emotional projection. It recalls some swing and "rhythm and blues" improvisation in this respect, in rhythm, and in that it walks and hops from chord to chord with short riff-like phrases, as much agility and as little repetition as possible, but with apparently little real recognition of the possibilities of larger melodic or rhythmic design or development. Within his medium, Adams is unquestionably good; the question is the apparently fragmentary and transitory nature of the medium itself.

Billie Holiday: The Blues Are Brewing

Decca DL-8701, \$3.98.

▲MISS Holiday seldom sings blues; here *Baby Get Lost* and *Keeps on Rainin'* (based on the sixteen-bar form) are two of the five or so she has sung. What she does is transform popular songs into... well, into blues. The set includes two fairly amusing and agreeable duets with Louis Armstrong, two rather pedestrian visits to novelty tunes from the Bessie Smith repertory of her waning days, and some pop tunes, few of them (including Bernstein's unusual *Big Stuff*) really good. Most of her best work for this label has been collected previously in DL-8215 and DL-8702; this one got mostly the leftovers.

•
Wynton Kelly: Piano. Riverside RLP 12-254, \$4.98.

▲ON this record a pianist whose recent work might roughly be classed with the "funky" school and who has shown himself to be a very good accompanist to both instrumentalists and singers, and who has contributed some notable solos on various dates in the past two years, provides a recital which, although it usually shows his fine rhythmic consistency and contains some imaginative playing (the last chorus of *Whisper Not*, say), largely consists of single-note lines of fairly conventional quality and has some "mood" pieces which in part verge on cocktail slickness.

•
Bill Evans. Riverside RLP-12-223, \$4.98.

▲THIS is a belated report. The record—a solo and trio piano recital—is by now many months old. In all there are eleven numbers, three of them brief, out-of-tempo things that don't seem to have much point. Of the others, it is a great pleasure to report on a "new" jazzman who has largely absorbed his influences and not only made a style that is homogeneous but which also often shows a real originality in harmony, line and rhythm, a meaningful variety in touch and dynamics, and a flexibility that suggests that the possibilities for further development are there.

•
Little Jimmy Rushing and the Big Brass. Columbia CL-1152, \$3.98.

Lee Wiley—A Touch of the Blues. Victor LPM-1566, \$3.98.

▲JIMMY Rushing and Lee Wiley, two first-rate singers who have been around forever, are back again. Each performs with a big band (Miss Wiley, in particular, always sounds better with a small group), and each does pretty much what you would expect. Good records, both of them, and sure to please their fans, but

anyone looking for an introduction to either singer would be better off going to the records that made the reputation.

—J.G.

●
Soul Brothers: *Milt Jackson and Ray Charles*. Atlantic 1279, \$4.98.

▲ANY blowing session is more dependent on the caliber of the musicians involved than are other kinds of jazz records. It can be as lasting as the famous Miles Davis "Bags Groove" session, or as valueless as the majority of the east coast jam sessions currently appearing on the market. The musicians here are of top quality—Milt Jackson, Ray Charles, Connie Kay, Billy Mitchell, Skeeter Best, and Oscar Pettiford—but the two principals are often involved with things other than their specialties. Jackson's vibes appear on much of the record; at other times he is playing either piano or guitar. Charles does not sing at all, but plays piano and alto. At times these performances (each selection is a blues) are either enjoyable *per se* or give insight into the performer (Charles' touching slow piano blues and screaming alto, and Jackson's astonishingly uncluttered back-country guitar), but at other times they have only the same kind of extra-musical interest of Sammy Davis, Jr., playing

drums with the Gillespie band. The other musicians play very well, with Best's guitar solo on *How Long* coming to mind, and Pettiford's bass being exceptional throughout. The record's title is an apt one—the two men approach the same point from different directions. If this group makes another album, Charles should sing.

—J.G.

●
Horace Silver Quintette. Blue Note 1589, \$4.98.

▲IT appears to me that Silver has settled down into much more of a groove than his publicity releases would have you believe. The spark that made him so exciting a few years back has now become almost a set of mannerisms. His group is much better than average, and so is their album, but it seems to lack the inner drive and sense of urgency that certain musicians bring to a performance. If this spark comes, it will probably not come from Silver but from trumpeter Art Farmer, who has a finer sense of structure and more lyricism than such widely touted young men as Donald Byrd, Lee Morgan, etc. He is the man in the group to watch. At present, it can only be said of the group that good, solid workmanship is to be admired, but is seldom exciting.

—J.G.

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Folk Music

By ROBERT SHERMAN

Songs With Guy Carawan. Folkways FG-3544, \$5.95.

▲CARAWAN is a bright, fresh talent, and the young Californian's recording debut is an auspicious one. Admittedly raised outside folk traditions, (he writes: "I didn't come in contact with folksongs until I was twenty-one"), Carawan, now just past thirty, also freely acknowledges his debt to many other folk artists. But unquestionably he has developed a personable and convincing style of his own, and his perceptive interpretations have an authentic ring. A versatile singer into the bargain, he seems equally at home with the southern banjo tune *Sourwood Mountain*, a lovely Negro carol *Virgin Mary*, an English ballad *The Water is Wide*, and sundry other folk songs and blues. He even makes a brief and not unsuccessful excursion into Russian and Israeli song with lively versions of *Katusha* and *Hava Nagilah*. Although his pronunciation here is not likely to be mistaken for that of a native, he sings them both with verve and obvious relish. The imaginative accompaniments, provided by Mr. C. himself with the assistance of guitarist John Cohen and bass-player Ollie Phillips, also add much to the effectiveness of the album. Only the quality of sound leaves something to be desired—it is shallow and often quite shrill.

The Virtuoso Gypsy: Edi Csoka and his Gypsy Orchestra. Vanguard VRS-9023, \$4.98. Toki Horvath (King of the Gypsies) and his Hungarian Gypsy Band. Angel 65040, \$3.98.

▲DEVOTEES of the sensuous, soulful, and often dazzling Gypsy music should have a wonderful time with these fine, new albums—both Edi Csoka and Toki Horvath are fantastic fiddlers, thoroughly imbued with gypsy fire and artistry. The main difference between the discs is the over-all mood. Csoka's interpretations seem intended primarily for the customers at some crowded, candlelit cafe, and the diet of Hungarian favorites is modified with Rumanian dances, a Russian song, a czardas by Lehár, and even an Italian serenade. Horvath's performances, on the other hand, are much closer to real folk tradition, and seem more like the sort of music a gypsy band would play at a village festival. Although both albums provide highly enjoyable listening, my own preference is for the Angel release: I found the choice of material more stimu-

lating, and additional variety is achieved by the inclusion of several folk ballads, nicely sung by Mihaly Székely. There is also an interesting cimbalom solo here, and the disc is climaxed by *The Nightingale*, a showcase for Horvath's stunning violin pyrotechnics. The quality of sound on both sets is first-rate.

Along the Volga: The National Chorus of Russian Song. Decca DL-9985, \$3.98.

▲THIS large (95-voice), superbly trained mixed choir was founded during the Second World War, and has since been understandably acclaimed for its work both within the Soviet Union and on tours through other European countries. Although it has, perhaps, a little less flexibility than some of the smaller Russian choruses, it boasts remarkable precision and magnificent voices, capable alternately of tender lyricism and stunning power. Their program contains many of the dramatic, "moody" Russian songs, along with such lively ballads as *At The Smithy* and *The Little Birch Brooms*, and also includes the familiar but still tremendously exciting *Song of the Volga Boatmen*. Under A. Y. Sveshnikov's direction, the choir performs with spirit and finesse, and the only disappointment here is the distant, sometimes muffled sound. I had the impression of listening from the back of a large auditorium and, especially during the extended pianissimo sections, kept wishing I could move forward a dozen rows or so.

Granada: London 5427, \$3.98; Festival Gitana: Elektra EKL-149, \$4.98; Viva Flamenco: Decca DL-8736, \$3.98; Flamenco Carnival: Period RL-1927, \$4.98.

▲AND still they come. The current Schwann catalogue lists nearly seventy albums of flamenco music—a bewildering total, which seems in no way to discourage more and more new releases of this material. The latest crop includes "Granada", containing performances by Maria La Canastera and her ensemble, "Festival Gitana", featuring the guitarist Sabicas, along with several singers and dancers, "Viva Flamenco!", with the equally renowned Mario Escudero and company, and "Flamenco Carnival", spotlighting singer Enrique Montoya and a trio of gypsy artists. From the point of view of sheer sound, Elektra and Period take the

honors with vibrant, fully lifelike reproduction. Decca's sonics are somewhat muffled, while London's are fairly shrill and occasionally seem out of focus. In content, though, the story is reversed: most interesting of all is the London release, which (if one can trust the rather ambiguous liner notes) was actually recorded in the famed Gypsy caves of Sacromonte. Maria La Canastera's troupe is considerably larger than any of the others, and "Granada" generates a much greater feeling of spontaneous excitement and intensity than do the more sterile (albeit admittedly higher-fi) studio recordings. As was the case with Alan Lomax's flamenco album, there is an undeniable aura of authenticity here, and the festive mood is captured to a remarkable degree. If the remaining three releases are quite similar, it is hardly a matter of wonder—Enrique Montoya sings on all three, while guitarists Diego Castellon and El Niño de Alicante and dancer Anita Ramos are each heard on two of the discs. Performances throughout are exemplary, and the recordings can be recommended both to novices who have yet to sample this fiery flamenco music and to the dyed-in-the-wool *aficionados* who apparently never tire of it. Again excepting the quality of recorded sound, I would say that the Decca disc is the best buy of the three. Not only is the price lower, but several superb guitar solos and duets are included along with the vocal numbers.

•
Man Is for the Woman Made; John Runge. Riverside RLP-12-817, \$4.98.

▲RUNGE's second disc for Riverside is devoted to music of England's Elizabethan era, and includes diverse songs by Purcell, Campion, Dowland, and others, as well as a few traditional ballads. Although Runge maintains his high standards of musicianship, his performances for the most part seem to lack the sparkle and buoyancy that made the earlier release so delightful, and the collection as a whole seems just a trifle academic. On the positive side are several delightful selections, including Philip Rosseter's lilting *I Care Not for These Ladies*, and the song by Purcell which gives the album its title. Intimate, well-defined sound.

•
Scotch Mist. Jubilee JLP-1068, \$3.98.

▲MISS Marilyn Lovell, a young lady with a warm, pleasing voice, is featured here in thirteen songs from and about Scotland. Included are traditional folk melodies, a couple of Robert Burns' verses, and several contemporary popular ballads, all in tastefully slick arrangements by Stanley Applebaum, who conducts the orchestra. Although several of the songs, such as the rhythmic *Robin Tam-*



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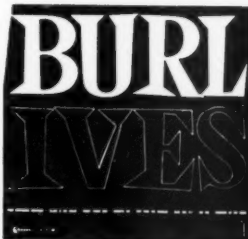
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son's Smithy and Messrs. Lerner and Loewe's *The Heather on the Hill*, emerge with a good deal of charm, I find that too many of Miss Lovell's interpretations lack personality and real depth of feeling. The livelier numbers seldom have enough bounce and sparkle (even the saucy *Wee Cooper O' Fife* retains little of its breezy lift), while some of the slower ones are too sentimental for my taste. None the less it's all quite well recorded, and makes pleasant enough, if innocuous, listening.

Munich's 800 Years. Capitol T-10138, \$3.98.

▲THE city of Munich, founded in 1158, is the scene of the colorful and high-spirited "Oktoberfest", a celebration which annually attracts thousands of visitors. Held, oddly enough, in late September, it originally honored the marriage on October 12, 1810, of King Ludwig I and Princess Therese, and has now grown to the point where, to quote the exuberant liner notes, "it is Rio's Mardi Gras, Times Square on New Year's Eve and the Venice Film Festival combined". In any event, the disc takes us on a tour of Munich at the height of the festivities: we hear some of the sounds of the city, along with the lively yodels, dances, marches, and stein songs. Although everything is exceedingly well recorded, and unquestionably succeeds in capturing the jovial atmosphere of carnival gaiety, the proverbial fly in the ointment: the disc is crowded with jokes, conversations, comedy routines, speeches, and an extended narration—all in German! We poor Americans, who would also like to join in the merriment, are frustrated at

every turn. No translations are given (we must even guess at the meanings of the more than two dozen separate titles), nor are there any specific notes or explanations to guide us. Why, the record isn't even banded! Should we, for instance, be particularly anxious to hear *Die Ganshandlerin Vom Viktualienmarkt*, we are offered only the helpful information that it is the thirteenth selection on side A, and that it immediately follows *Kuhglockengelaute*. In short, as delightful as this Bavarian music is, if you don't understand German well enough to distinguish *Drei Banzenschläge* from *zwei Schneeweisse Taubel* you'd better pass it.

Rumanian Folk Songs and Dances:

Monitor MF-304, \$4.98.

Lithuanian Folk Songs and Dances:

Monitor MF-305, \$4.98.

Latvian Folk Songs and Dances:

Monitor MF-306, \$4.98.

▲WITH these three highly rewarding releases, Monitor continues to build up the most comprehensive library of Eastern European folk songs and dances to be found on LP (earlier recordings in this series include Russian, Ukrainian, and Armenian music). Of the three, the Rumanian disc especially is a listening treat. About half the numbers are performed by a colorful ensemble called "The Lark"; others feature various singers with folk instrument accompaniments; and there are even a couple of breath-taking xylophone solos (including, of course, the *Hora Staccato*). In such a varied and scintillating collection as this it is really quite difficult to single out "favorites", but I particularly liked Ion Christuriani's robust version of a gay *Song from Rasinari*, and several instrumental dances which incorporate the shrill, exotic-sounding "pipes of Pan". These dances, by the way, are extremely similar, both in content and mood, to Enesco's famous "Rhapsodies", and indeed probably served as models for them. The Latvian and Lithuanian discs, while not consistently of the same high caliber, are nevertheless of great interest since they are, for all practical purposes, the only commercial LPs of this music available in the U.S.A. This lack of recordings becomes all the more difficult to understand when we hear the richness and variety of the music from these tiny Baltic countries—music which abounds in tuneful, lilting melodies, and lively rhythms. No matter if the voices are not so magnificent as those in many of the great Russian choruses, or if the quality of sound is not always the ultimate in fidelity—what counts is that at last we have representative collections of these wonderful songs, honestly and lovingly performed by real native artists.

SOUND IDEAS

I thought I would devote the next month or so to articles on stereo and then settle down to discussions of speaker systems, do-it-yourself kits, *et al* Well, that was before the stereodisc made stereo an everyday word. Now every manufacturer of anything which even remotely could be called "high-fidelity" is busily turning out stereo amplifiers, pre-amplifiers, speakers, tone arms, turntables, tape decks and recorders, and cartridges. Cartridges for both disc and tape will be our topic for this month.

On June 2nd of this year RCA Victor unveiled a long-rumored tape cartridge system. Briefly, the recorded tape is pre-threaded within a plug-in cassette. To play, this is merely slipped on the specially-designed tape recorder.

The principal obstacles to general acceptance of stereo tape have been its high price and its inconvenience. I'm afraid that even we die-hard tape fans must concede that it is considerably easier to put on a record than to thread the old tape machine—and try to find in a hurry the opening of the second movement, say, on a tape! Also, \$18.95 for forty-odd minutes of music can hardly be called a bargain. None the less, tape is the preferred medium because of its clear-cut fidelity superiority. (Discophiles, please, no poisoned arrows!)

So it was with something of a blasé attitude that I greeted the first news of RCA's new system. In due course the mailman arrived with pages of advance information and a sample tape cartridge. The best news: these stereo tape cartridges are to sell for \$4.95 to \$8.95.

The cartridge itself is about 5 x 7 inches in size and ½ inch thick. It is made of a styrene-like plastic; I haven't tried but I suspect it will break if dropped. In the illustration at the right the cartridge may be seen in playing position. As for the tape itself, instead of the normal two stereo tracks there are *four* tracks. Two (that is, one stereo set) are reproduced

as the tape travels in one direction, and the second set is played on reversing the tape. Thus, this is in effect a twin-track stereo tape. The tape speed that RCA selected is 3¾ inches per second. This is obviously half the 7½ i.p.s. generally accepted as the slowest speed consistent with high-fidelity requirements. I have yet to hear a home playback machine which was capable of really first-rate performance at the slower speed. Conversely, I have yet to hear a low- to medium-priced home high-fidelity system on which a significant difference was detectable between the two speeds.

In summary, this system can be compared, and favorably so, to similarly priced stereodisc playback systems. Two machines thus far announced by RCA run to \$295 for a semi-automatic, and \$450 for a fully automatic, self-reversing, machine. This caviar is salmon eggs, not sturgeon.

Before turning to the round-up of stereodisc cartridges, in this season of audio shows I should like to air some of my pet I-hate-audio-shows-because peeves.

First and most certainly foremost, please, Mr. Demonstrator, turn down the volume. My neighbors would call the riot squad, and rightly so, if I played anything as loudly as that. Seriously, the test of a quality system is not its power but its natural, *real-sounding* reproduction *in the home*. Perhaps if enough of you

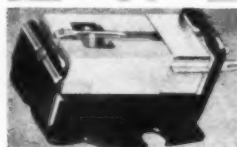
(Continued on page 88)



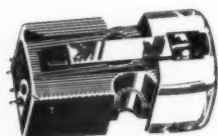
AUDIO *visual*



Response: 30 to 15,000db
Output: 2mv per channel
Compliance: $v.$, 5×10^{-6} ; 1.,
same
Dynamic Mass of Stylus: .003
grams
Channel Separation: 20-25db
Stylus Change: by factory



Response: 10 to 15,000db
Output: 6mv per channel
Compliance: $v.$, 6×10^{-6} ; 1.,
same
Channel Separation: 25db
Stylus Change: by factory



Response: 10 to 30,000db
Output: 1mv/cm/dyne
Channel Separation: 20db +
Load Impedance: 27,000 to 47,
000 ohms
Stylus Change: by user
(Unipoise Arm and integrated
Stereo Fluxvalve—\$59.85)



Response: 30 to 18,500db
Output: 25mv
Compliance: 4×10^{-6}
Optimum Load: 37k
Channel Separation: 20db
Stylus Change: by user



Response: 20 to 16,000db
Output: .5v
Compliance: 2×10^{-6}
Channel Separation: 20db
Stylus Change: by user
(26-DST, with diamond stereo
and sapphire 3-mil styli, \$22.50)



Response: 20 to 17,000db
Output: 6mv per channel
Compliance: $v.$, 2×10^{-6} ; 1.,
 3×10^{-6}
Optimum Load: 100k
Dynamic Mass of Stylus: .002
grams
Stylus Change: by user



Response: 20 to 12,000 smooth
Output: .3v
Compliance: 2×10^{-6}
Channel Separation: 20db
Stylus Change: by user
(8T4-SD has .7-mil diamond and
3-mil sapphire; 8T4-D, 2 dia-
mond styli, \$34.50)

AUDIOGERSH

Stereotwin 200
Variable Reluctance
\$59.50

ELECTRO-SONIC

Gyro/Jewel C-100
Electrodynamic
\$85.00 (includes two
transformers)

ELECTRO-VOICE

21-D Ceramic
\$19.50 (21-S
Sapphire, \$9.90)

FAIRCHILD

232
Moving Coil
\$49.50

GENERAL ELECTRIC

Stereo Classic;
Golden Classic
\$16.95; \$23.95

PICKERING

Stanton Stereo
Fluxvalve 371-D
Magnetic
\$29.85

SONOTONE

8T4-SD
Ceramic Flipover
\$24.50

elliptical, businesslike manner, I give the following passage in both translations::

It was a splendid day in July when the lake steamer brought me there. Mahler met me at the landing and, in spite of my protest, carried my suitcase down the gangway himself until he was relieved of it by some ministering spirit. When, on our way to his house, my glance fell upon the Höllengebirge, whose forbidding rocky walls formed the background of an otherwise charming landscape, Mahler said: "No need to look there any more—that's all been used up and set to music by me". . . (Galston, p.24)

I arrived by steamer on a glorious July day; Mahler was there on the jetty to meet me, and despite my protests, insisted on carrying my bag until he was relieved by a porter. As on our way to his house I looked up to the Höllengebirge, whose sheer cliffs made a grim background to the charming landscape, he said: "You don't need to look—I have composed all this already!" (X, p.28)

He was referring—yes, you guessed it—to the first movement of his Third Symphony.

There remains to be mentioned one jarring note in Dr. Walter's own 1958 preface to the new edition. His earlier preface of 1936 had begun: "For many years, inclination and a sense of duty have urged me to speak of Gustav Mahler." No one so far as I know has ever doubted that his long and intimate acquaintance with the master makes him an ideal person to do so, despite their striking differences in temperament. I believe that he has given a faithful and accurate picture of Mahler the man, one that jells in every respect with numerous other accounts. It does not follow, however (nor has he ever said so), that Walter carries on a "Mahler spirit" in the musical world today, as is sometimes assumed, or that others may not represent that elusive spirit, however it may be defined, to a far stronger degree.

I mention this because Walter himself reminds us in a revealing passage how vastly and basically different he is from the man who gave him his own big chance at the age of eighteen, who "had confidence and interest in everything new" (p.43), and who also championed to the

end of his life that most controversial of younger *creative* generations that was maturing in his midst, as exemplified in particular by his young friend Schönberg. With regard to the contemporary music since Mahler, Walter has become well known as a conservative, and certainly has a right to his opinion if anyone does. But with the following passage in the new preface from Beverly Hills, I must take strong issue in the present context:

Look, for example, at the fatal effects of the crisis after the First World War; art, either "intellectualized" or proliferating into sheer "entertainment", was given over to sensationalism and the worship of mere technical proficiency in music, to atonality, to the twelve-tone system, to experimentation regardless of content, and all this within a general climate of materialism and utilitarianism, and amid the conflict of contending political ideologies. (p.xi)

I feel that this sweeping identification of atonality with materialism, sensationalism, etc., is unworthy of the man who only twelve years ago wrote in his autobiography:

Arnold Schönberg is undoubtedly not only a pure and incorruptible idealist but also a powerfully and uniquely intuitive musician. I am quite serious when I say that I should be happy if in a future existence, in which I shall have the benefit of superior organs of musical perception, I were to be able to ask his forgiveness for my primitive mundane lack of understanding. (p. 170)

Has Dr. Walter now forgotten the equally challenging words uttered fifty years ago about Schönberg by his idol Mahler?: "I don't understand his music, but he's young and perhaps he's right. I am old and I dare say my ear is not sensitive enough." Can he so soon have forgotten his own splendid words in the very act of honoring the man whose example of tolerance seemed to inspire them? And finally, to raise a thought even more disturbing, why did he write the one passage during Schönberg's lifetime and the other after his death? If the latter means what it says, he now has more for which to ask Schönberg's forgiveness. I should be happy indeed if *this* were a mistranslation.

sance culture. Renaissance music in general was a continental art, not a purely Italian one. Rather, it was rooted part and parcel in what had been developing through the Middle Ages. Moreover, of all the major arts music was the one which had, with one curious exception at the end of the sixteenth century, no humanistic overlay, no tradition of Classical models. Here is true continuity in Renaissance art.

This continuity must, of course, be understood. It is the same continuity as that of the music from the early period of polyphony into that of the late Middle Ages. There were certainly changes as polyphony developed, but they were by no means revolutionary changes such as that between the early and high Middle Ages, the transition from Gregorian monophony to polyphony. Indeed, the change was not even so great as that effected by the *Ars nova* innovations at the beginning of the late medieval period: no great "rebirth" here in this aspect of the Renaissance!

What change there was between medieval and Renaissance music did not mark a clear line of separation, but for purposes of convenience here we shall mark it as the transfer in leadership from the Burgundian school to the Flemish or Netherlandic school during the second half of the fifteenth century. Certain contrasts may be observed between the two: with the Flemish school the emphasis was much more on continuous flow—even Dunstable had pointed towards this—instead of the frequent cadences and subdivisions of text typical of Dufay; the shape of the melodies was less florid and soaring, with more attention instead to a tighter and more compact organization of the voices in relation to each other, and with less of the Burgundian contrast through dimensional divisions of choir and soloists; the *cantus firmus* became less the *raison d'être* of the music and was simply one element of the total structure providing material used in all voices; and while

secular music continued to be written in roughly the Burgundian style it was sacred music that was to be the subject of the most advanced attention of the Flemish school.

There were a number of important composers whose names were associated with the rising Flemish style, including Jacob Obrecht (c.1430-1505) and Antoine Busnois (d.1492), but the most outstanding was without doubt Johannes Ockeghem. Born in Flanders between 1420 and 1430, Ockeghem spent most of his years in France as first chaplain and composer to Kings Charles VII, Louis XI, and Charles VIII, holding also a choice post at the historic Abbey of St. Martin of Tours. He was not a prolific composer, judging from what survives, but he had an enormous influence and was widely respected. It is a sign of the times that we can trace more and more individualistic, personal styles such as his. It is not an ingratiating style, particularly in his sacred music, and it can make rather dry listening: it is a terse and taut style with a more severe and modal diatonic quality than the more chromatic and relatively flamboyant style of Dufay; there is more attention to construction, and color is achieved not with dimensional contrasts but through various pairings of the voices; imitation and more advanced contrapuntal techniques are employed; all these pointing the way for the style of mature polyphony in its ultimate phases.

In addition to his own composition, however, Ockeghem was important as the teacher of a whole generation of composers, including Alexander Agricola (d.c. 1506), Pierre de la Rue (d. 1518), Antoine Brumel (d. after 1505), and Loyset Compère (d.1518). But foremost among them all was Josquin des Prés. It was a custom at the time that when a well-known composer died his pupils and fellow-composers would write laments in his honor. When Ockeghem died in 1495 the gestures were all sincere, but of these the only one familiar today is the deeply moving *Deploration de Johannes Ockeghem* by Josquin.

Josquin des Prés, or des Prez, was one of the most eminent musicians of his age.

Martin Luther, a devout music-lover himself, is supposed to have remarked: "Josquin is master of the notes—these have to do as he wills. Other choir-masters have to do as the notes will." In personality Josquin seems to have been something of the Beethoven of his day—curt, sarcastic, independent, and uncompromising. Born about 1450 in Hainault, he served the Sforzas in Milan, Popes Innocent VIII (1484-1493) and Alexander VI (1493-1503) in Rome, and Louis XII of France. He died in 1521. His music enriched the Netherlandic style in two ways: with new logical and technical facility, and with a new mystic universality. His secular pieces set the pattern for the great sixteenth-century flourishing of the polyphonic *chanson*; his Masses opened up new avenues of technical progress; and his finest works, his motets, display a sublime mixture of contrapuntal subtlety—especially in his use of imitation—with simple, moving clarity. His music retained its popularity for generations after his death: indeed, he was perhaps the first master of Western music to have risen above his times and become a creator of timeless beauty. Josquin

was thus one of the foremost composers of the Renaissance and, in truth, of all time.

Josquin, too, was a great teacher, and many of his pupils were native Frenchmen, among whom were Jean Mouton (c.1475-1522), Claude de Sermisy (c.1490-c.1562), and Nicholas Gombert (c.1505-?). His best-known pupil was perhaps Clément Jannequin (1475-c.1560) whose secular works constitute the high point of the French polyphonic *chanson*. Among his most celebrated pieces are the quaintly literal *Chant des oiseaux* and the incredible and vividly programmatic *Bataille de Marignan*, describing the great battle in 1515.

With the generation of Josquin's pupils the style of the Flemish school came into its own as the recognized and dominant standard for European polyphonic art. Not all of its practitioners were ethnically Flemish, of course, but the origin and continuity of the style justify, for convenience, the use of the appellation "Netherlandic". Nor were all the polyphonic masters of the time necessarily connected directly with that school, as witness Josquin's great German contemporary, Heinrich Isaak (c.1450-1517), composer of polished sacred and secular polyphony for the Medici of Florence and the Emperor Maximilian; and Juan del Encina (1469-1534) the cultivated playwright, poet, and composer of the court of Ferdinand and Isabella. But the leading composers of the day were generally of the Flemish, or Netherlands, school and musicians of such background were called to posts all over Europe, dominating the musical scene for the first half of the sixteenth century. Names are too numerous for any adequate coverage in this limited space, but among the most eminent may be pointed out Mouton's pupil Adrian Willaert (c.1480-1652) and his own pupil Cyprien de Rore (1516-1565), both in Venice, Jacob Arcadelt (c.1504-1555) at Florence and Rome, and Jachet van Berchem (fl.1546-1561) at Ferrara, contributors to the development of the madrigal as well as the motet.

As the sixteenth century progressed, however, a diffusion of the Flemish art



ROME IN PALESTRINA'S DAY

The illustration is taken from an old map of 1570 showing St. Peter's in course of reconstruction. The house where Palestrina lived for nearly a quarter of a century and died was probably situated in the street at the top left-hand corner of the picture

took place. The advanced polyphonic idiom became no longer simply a monopoly of musicians in the direct Netherlands tradition and training. Rather, the Netherlands style became the standard and its techniques part of the language of European musical art. The second half of the century was therefore characterized by a diffuse and varied musical activity throughout Western Europe. Not all of it, moreover, was necessarily a part of the development of vocal polyphony. There was a growth of interest and originality in instrumental music. This was notably true in Spain, with Luys Milan (c.1500-after 1561) on behalf of the lute, and the blind Hernando Cabezón

(1510-1566) for the keyboard. The influence of both was to be felt in England respectively in the great lute school of John Dowland (1568-1626) and in the virginal and harpsichord school exemplified best by Gilles Farnaby (c.1560-?). In Italy there was also a continued interest in secular vocal forms of folk origin, often with a monodic tendency, but with a great deal of attention paid to the madrigal with its unstable and fluid blend of polyphony and dramatic poetry, by such diverse talents as Luca Marenzio (1553-1599) and the fantastic Don Carlo Gesualdo (c.1560-1615). Again England was a beneficiary of foreign influence with its immortal madrigalists, perhaps the most celebrated of whom was Thomas Morley (c.1557-1602).

(Continued from page 83)

who go to these shows insisted that equipment be demonstrated at intelligent levels the message might get across to some of the exhibitors. After all, *you* are the potential customer for audio equipment and they know it. Make yourself heard although you may have to shout.

I don't know how it is elsewhere, but at least in New York have you ever tried, after about two or three hours of tramping from exhibit to exhibit, to find a quiet, comfortable room to sit down in and rest a while? If you do find one, let me know.

I suspect that the majority of exhibits this year will center on the new stereo records. The one basically all-new product for these records is the stereodisc cartridge. It is this device which is responsible for converting the two-channel information contained in the single record groove into two separate electrical currents to feed the amplifiers.

As of this writing at least seven firms have announced stereo cartridges with prices running from \$19.50 to \$85 for diamond styli models. Most of these are illustrated on page 84, together with specifications *as supplied by the manufacturers*. Some "specs" and photos were not supplied by press time. In the coming months I expect to test several of these cartridges. I have just received the ESL C-100 and a complete report on this one, at least, should be ready for the October issue.

England was more, however, than simply a rubber stamp for foreign trends. This period was one of the richest in its musical history—indeed, music was one of the chief glories of Elizabethan culture. After Dunstable (d.1453) there were few English composers of note except perhaps John Taverner (c.1495-1545) until Thomas Tallis (1505-1585), whose lucidly grave and majestic style was to set the pattern for the music of the evolving Anglican Church. One of his pupils was William Byrd (1543-1623), one of England's greatest native composers. Though a Roman Catholic and often in trouble for this, he found no difficulty in composing ecclesiastical music for both Roman and Anglican use. He retained the favor of Queen Elizabeth and, together with his master and then colleague, Tallis, enjoyed a joint monopoly of the printing and selling of music in the realm. His rich, full style, though not uninfluenced by the school of Palestrina, was strikingly original, with a characteristic English feeling for the rhythms of words, and he ranks as one of the great masters of Renaissance polyphony. The third scion of this illustrious Britannic tradition was Orlando Gibbons (1583-1635), a gifted and versatile composer whose efforts extended to instrumental as well as choral music, and who is one of the major figures of Elizabethan and Jacobean music.

On the broadest scale, however, the final stage of Renaissance polyphony may best be summed up, within the brief space here, in the work of three men: Lassus, Victoria, and Palestrina. Of the three, Lassus—Roland de Lassus, Orlando di Lasso, or as he sometimes signed himself, Orlandus de Lassus—was perhaps the most typical of the Renaissance personality: worldly, polished, versatile, successful, an ideal courtier, and a true "universal man". Born about 1572 of Walloon antecedents, he went through various terms of service and had contacts with many of the great courts of Europe, though his main loyalty remained to the Duke of Bavaria. An extraordinarily prolific composer—his output has been reckoned at some 1,250 compositions—his works rapidly won him international recognition and popularity. He died in 1594, prosperous, happy, and famous. Like its composer, his music is diversified and cosmopolitan, blending the Netherlandic with Italian, French, and German styles. He wrote with equal facility in various forms and styles of secular music, leaving in this field one of the richest contributions to Renaissance music. His ecclesiastical music also is original and striking, his Masses full of color and ingenuity, though perhaps not quite on a level with those of Palestrina, while his motets are remarkably dramatic and individualistic. Lassus was a master of polyphonic structure; he blended strands of sounds in the *cantus firmus* (involving use of old Gregorian material as the basis for polyphony) and *parody* (involving use of material from a sacred or secular motet by another composer as the basis usually for a Mass) styles of his day. In addition he demonstrated a daring sense of chordality and tonality which not only gave some of his music an individual flavor but also pointed to the future.

If Lassus may be taken to represent best the summation of the Renaissance personality in music, the next composer belongs totally to another aspect of the period, the Counter-Reformation. Though the most neglected of the three composers, the Spaniard Tomás Luis Victoria was a splendid illustration of the spirit of

solemn piety and devout mysticism which characterized the ideals of the reformed Roman Church, as well as of the intense Iberian faith which made Spain one of the mainstays of Catholicism. Victoria was born near Avila in 1548 (he may have known St. Theresa), spent many years in Rome, and lived his last three decades in Spain, dying in 1611. Greatly influenced by the style of Palestrina, he nevertheless added a quality all his own—an intense, sometimes chromatic, expression of deep religious fervor.

But the ultimate master of Renaissance polyphony beyond all doubt was Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina. He was born about 1525 of the Pierluigi family in the old town whose name he bears. He studied at Rome for a while, perhaps under Arcadelt, and after holding a post in his home town he entered the Papal service, in which he remained from the time of Pope Julius III (1550-1555) until his own death in 1594, resisting the temptations of other posts. When he died he was buried with honor and with the epitaph "*Princeps musicae*" ("Prince of Music"). Palestrina is the epitome of polyphonic art in its last, fullest, richest, most mature phase. He was quite as much as Victoria a product of the Catholic Counter-Reformation, perhaps even more so because he received special commendation from a committee set up by the Council of Trent to study Church music, and also was employed to help "purify" the liturgy. But there was more to Palestrina than simply the religious spirit of his time and circumstances. In his supreme synthesis of the best of Netherlandic and other styles, in his mastery of polyphonic weaving, and in his sublime creations of soaring choral sound, Palestrina transcended his own specific time and became timeless, a creator of universal beauty and one of the small circle of the truly great immortals of Western music.

Obviously these three men were only the most outstanding of the composers of their time. Space simply does not permit a more detailed investigation of the wide musical activity of the age. A word should be said, however, about the so-called Venetian school, which represented

another Italian polyphonic style as distinguished from the so-called Roman school of Palestrina and his associates. Earlier in the sixteenth century, Venice had developed as a center of imported polyphony under Willaert and de Rore, but later in the century it continued to evolve a native, independent style. If the Roman school was more concerned with structure, purity, and flow of line, the Venetian style delighted more in brilliance of color and wide range and contrasts of sound, instrumental as well as choral. It included a large group of minor masters, among whom was Andrea Gabrieli (c.1510-1586), who passed on to his nephew Giovanni Gabrieli (1557-1612), a tradition of grandiose musical splendor which at once reflected the spirit of the Serene Republic and became the first bastion of the new Baroque art of the next century.

Thus did the sixteenth century draw to a close with the bustling activity that distinguished polyphonic art at its zenith. Few could have dreamed, at the time, of the total upheaval that was to come in the music of the next generation.

None of the periods of musical developments thus far considered have received so much attention on records as has this one. It is good to have so much material available, but perforce it reduces the following discography by virtue of selectivity. Also, I will make fewer comments than previously on individual recordings, and there will be more cross-references. Mention must be given first to a few of the many anthologies. As always, we may turn to Victor's *History of Music in Sound* for good examples of our subject, in this case in the end of Vol. III and much of Vol. IV. A very fine selection may be found in a collection of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century motets sung by the Welch Chorale (Lyricord LL-52); not quite so satisfactory but also valuable is a program by the New York Pro Musica Antiqua under Noah Greenberg (Period 597). But about the best introduction to the Netherlands school is contained in a selection of "Choral Music from the Lowlands, 15th and 16th Centuries" in beautiful performances

by the Netherlands Chamber Choir under Felix de Nobel on the reverse of an Epic disc (LC-3045).

Among the composers of the Flemish school the great founder, Ockeghem, is the most improperly neglected: the Pro Musica Antiqua of Brussels under Safford Cape perform some of his secular music on one side of a Decca Archive disc (ARC-3053); and the only record devoted in its entirety to him offers a very poor performance of his *Missa prolatorium* under James Fleetwood (Kingsway KL-221). Josquin has fared little better on individual records: indispensable is the Brussels group's program of his secular music, including the immortal lament for Ockeghem (EMS-213); a scant two of his beautiful motets are performed by the Dessoff Choirs on one side of a Concert Hall disc (CHC-47). Josquin's contemporary Isaak is represented with his *Missa carminum* and a program of sacred and secular choral music sung under Ferdinand Grossman on Westminster (XWN-18633). Secular *chansons* of Josquin's school as well as some lovely instrumental music of the early sixteenth century may be found in performances by Cape's group for Archive (ARC-3071). The same group also offers a splendid program on one side of another such disc (ARC-3034) of *chansons* by their greatest exponents, Jannequin, including the stunning *Bataille de Marignan* and the famous *Chant des oiseaux*. A general selection of French polyphonic *chansons* is performed by Ferdinand Lamy's ensemble for Oiseau-Lyre (OL-50027).

Some of Milan's lute music may be found on one side of an Archive disc (ARC-3078), while some of Cabezón's harpsichord music is played by Paul Wolfe for Expériences Anonymes (EA-26). Dowland's lute music is represented by a Westminster disc (XWN-18429) featuring Julian Bream; while Elizabethan keyboard music is offered by EMS (236), and Paul Wolfe (EA-0013), but best of all is the superb program of harpsichord pieces of Gibbons and Farnaby done by Thurston Dart on the Oiseau-Lyre label (OL-50131). Some

Italian madrigals of Marenzio and Gesualdo are offered by the Rudolph Lamy ensemble on Archive (ARC-3073), but the remarkable Gesualdo is better served by the Ferrara Singers under Robert Craft (Sunset 600), another group under the same conductor (Columbia ML-5234), and the Randolph Singers on one side of a Westminster release (XWN-18652). The best survey of English madrigals is the Deller Consort's "The English Madrigal School, Vols. I and II" (Bach Guild BG-553, 554), but one may also delve into the great *Triumphs of Oriana* collection as done by the Randolph Singers for Westminster (WAL-212).

Of the English school of polyphony, Tallis has been most neglected, with only the Bach Guild recording by the Deller group of *Lamentations* and *Hymnes* worth mentioning. Byrd has received better treatment: Vanguard offers a fine performance under Paul Callaway of *The Great Service* (VRS-453); Westminster has the Renaissance Singers doing some motets (XWN-18402) and his Masses for four and five voices (XWN-18401), while the latter are also done by Cape's group (EMS-234) and the Fleet Street Choir on a deleted London disc (LL-888). Some of Gibbons' choral music is sung by the Chapel Choir of King's College, Cambridge, for Westminster (XWN-18165), but a more varied selection of his work is offered by Deller's group on an Archive disc (ARC-3053).

Lassus is only beginning to receive the attention he deserves. The best demonstration of his diverse secular styles is

in the collection of *lieder, chansons, madrigale* and *villanelle* finely sung by Rudolph Lamy's group (ARC-3076). His *Missa Puisque j'ai perdu* has received two recordings, by Berlin (ARC-3077) and Vienna (Unicorn UNLP-1013) groups, and on the reverse of the former release are some of his ecclesiastical motets. One of his lovely *Penitential Psalms* is sung under de Nobel on a Concert Hall disc (CHS-1196) and two of his *Lamentations of Jeremiah* are roughly performed by the Dessoff Choirs on the reverse side of another (CHC-47).

The music of Victoria has been given scant attention on LP save in the anthologies and in a weak recording for Vox of his Requiem (PL-8930). Palestrina, of course, has received considerably more attention. His best-known work, the *Missa Papae Marcelli*, has been recorded a number of times, the best being under de Nobel on the obverse of the Epic disc cited above (LC-3045) and under Rehmann on the obverse of an Archive disc (ARC-3074), with two Viennese performances, one on Westminster (XWN-18364) and the other on one side of a Vox record (PL-10020), also worth noting. Another great Mass, the *Missa Assumpta est Maria*, has been recorded by the Dessoff Choirs under Boepple on a Concert Hall disc (CHS-1231), and by the Viennese group on the reverse of Vox PL-10020. The *Missa brevis* and *Missa ad fugam* are performed under de Nobel on another Epic disc (LL-3359), and the *Missa Veni sponsa Christi* under Gillesberger on the other side of Unicorn UNLP-1013. Not all the collections of

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Palestrina's motets are effective, but a few have gone through a number of satisfactory duplications, most notably the *Stabat Mater* in varying company on the reverse of several records already cited (ARC-3074, CHS-1231, and XWN-18632). Worthy of mention also is the wonderful motet *Assumpta est Maria* included in a motley program by the Desoff Choirs for Concert Hall (CHC-44). Finally, a good sample of Venetian polyphony may be found on a recording made by the chapel choir of the Cathedral of Treviso of "Motets of the Venetian School of the 16th Century" on Vox (PL-8030).

For all the recorded resources suggested by the foregoing list there are still grave gaps—and there will be more since a number of the recordings cited are exasperatingly being dropped by their producers and are becoming unavailable.

More attention should be given to Ockeghem, Josquin, and Lassus in particular. As the record-buying public becomes familiar with this material (and if the radio stations ever give up their disgraceful avoidance of playing music of this early a vintage!), this period will come to be more widely appreciated as one of the most fruitful and notable ages in the history of music—an age of an art in the fullness of its perfection.

For the convenience of those new readers who wish to have the previous articles in this series, the order of their appearance was as follows: "A Plea for Plainchant", October, 1957; "The Origins of Polyphony", March, 1958; and "A New Deal in Old Music", June, 1958. The fifth and final installment will be published sometime this winter.

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"Unlikely Corners"

WHY NOT LOOK below the surface occasionally and find out what it is in the direct appeal of the popular tune which makes the audience go home whistling; to see if there is not some artistic impulse hidden in unlikely corners. . .

—Ralph Vaughan Williams

AROUND the time that Vol. 1, No. 1 of what is now *The American Record Guide* appeared, a once vital trend in American music had pretty much come to a dead end. During the twenties a good deal of ink was consumed in the cause of jazz as the salvation (or even the beginning) of American music, both popular and "serious". By the mid-thirties the hullabaloo was over. Still, the cross-fertilization across musical fences has continued, though the process and practice is much more subtle today. One looks back to the good old days with a bittersweet pang of nostalgia, just the same, for even if they knew not what they did, at least they did something.

That most writers, of critical prose and even of music, didn't really understand their subject made little difference; all went to work with equal ignorance and zeal. Often as not the average journalist-critic had no idea of what the real folk jazz was. To him Irving Berlin was a jazz composer; Ben Bernie had a "jazz" band; he had no idea of the existence of "King" Oliver, "Jelly-Roll" Morton, or even Bessie Smith. By the thirties the New Critic of jazz appeared; at least he knew the real thing when he heard it. But scratch the new critic and you found a militant fan with a cause to plead, an axe to grind, and maybe a record to sell.

Jazz in its earliest manifestation was, in the main, improvisatory. It was a simple, untutored music played by self-taught but highly skilled musicians who, denied the usual avenues of expression and training, solved their own problems in their own ways. The spontaneity, drive, and invention naturally caught the attention of the "serious" composer who attempted to capture on paper what only existed in its natural state, that is, as performed. Like all folk music, jazz defied notation.

Now, using folk music sources in formal music is not a new development; it is a legitimate practice that has fertilized musical thinking for centuries. In our own time we need seek no further than

the works of Bartók and Vaughan Williams. And you can go back to Bach and beyond for other examples.

The point is that when longhair composers chose to borrow from the jazzmen tradition was with them. But alas, too many were not with the tradition. This may explain why so few jazz-inspired works are still played. Excepting the ever-green inspirations of George Gershwin (which were as much influenced by the theater as by jazz), we just don't hear any more the pieces that outraged and delighted concertgoers in the twenties.

What started all this is a most interesting album entitled **The Masters Write Jazz** (Dot DLP-3111) in which are assembled compositions by six composers of assorted hair-lengths: Alexandre Tansman, Paul Hindemith, Aaron Copland, Darius Milhaud, Igor Stravinsky, and George Gershwin. Of these only two are American-born and only one (Gershwin) was trained in this country. It would be easy to say that the American pieces come off sounding more like the real thing, but it is neither true nor the point at issue. As evocations of jazz all these pieces display a greater or lesser degree of authenticity, depending on what the composer had in mind when composing—which was usually an abstraction of those jazz elements that most impressed him, be it the rhythm, the harmony, or the form.

But it isn't jazz.

And frankly, this is precisely why I think this is an important release. It not only serves to illuminate the no man's land, the pointless void, separating popular music from "serious" music, but also it assembles some diverting and entertaining pieces, some of which are not available elsewhere. Not the least of the values of this record lies in the fine playing by the excellent pianist Leo Smit—a champion of the moderns.

As for the music, Tansman's *Spiritual and Blues*, a movement from his *Sonata transatlantique*, does not stray far from the source. The "spiritual" evokes the somber quality of *Swing Low Sweet Chariot*

and the "blues" section is moody and has some lovely moments. Tansman, a Polish-Parisian composer, has written for films and published a biographical study of Stravinsky.

Both Hindemith and Stravinsky saw jazz as a point of departure for compositions in their personal styles; likewise Milhaud. The former two, however, rewrote jazz in a most abstract manner.

To the post-World War I German intellectual, jazz represented a form of decadence that mirrored the spiritual decay of a beaten Germany. Jazz, instead of expressing gaiety and abandon, gave voice to cynicism and hopelessness. Two movements from his suite, "1922", Hindemith titled *Shimmy* and *Ragtime*. This is cerebral jazz, if jazz at all, but whatever the label this is searingly expressive music. (A somewhat younger contemporary of Hindemith's, the late Kurt Weill, similarly employed jazz in his stage works, most notably "*Die Dreigroschenoper*" and "*Mahagonny*", both available on records and both worth having. Weill's transcription of jazz elements was more literal—though obviously culled from dance band records—than Hindemith's and also it is easier to take).

Stravinsky's *Piano Rag Music* acknowledges his debt to the source by use of jagged rhythms and truncated motifs, a characteristic of his so-called neoclassic style. Echoes of this may also be heard in his Concerto for Piano and Winds, for not only the rhythms of jazz fascinated Stravinsky, but so did the employment of the piano in its percussive role. The composer abandoned jazz soon after these attempts and did not "write jazz" again until the forties, when he produced the delightful *Ebony Concerto* (Columbia ML-4398) for the Woody Herman band.

Milhaud evidenced an early interest in jazz, first via listening to dance records and later by visiting New York and its Harlem hot spots. His *Trois Rag Caprices* date from 1922; in them, like Hindemith and Stravinsky, Milhaud sounds like himself rather than *le jazz hot*. These pieces have a charm and zest typical of the composer, who frequently uses polytonality and polyrhythms. A year after he wrote them Milhaud produced the enchanting *La Création du Monde*, which has been given an American reading by Leonard Bernstein (Columbia CL-920). (I say "American" because French performances sound a lot less jazzy and Gershwinesque, and these are elements that Bernstein has been able to inject, *ex post facto*).

With Copland and Gershwin we come to the American-born composers who have written jazz; there are, of course, others. Copland's approach was somewhat along French lines, refined and intellectual,

perhaps a bit satirical. Smit performs the *Four Piano Blues*, which in its present grouping was introduced by him in 1950. Actually the composition of the suite ranges over a period from the twenties to the late forties. The closing piece, *With Bounce* (unfortunately, neither the label nor the liner notes gives movement designations) was written in 1926, when Copland was occupied with jazz—around this time he also produced *Music for the Theater* and the Piano Concerto (often called the *Jazz Concerto*). Another 1926 composition for piano, *Sentimental Melody*, is in the same bluesy vein (no doubt a companion piece to *With Bounce*); it is not included in the present suite.

With Gershwin we come to the composer who composed with his heart more readily than his mind. He preferred it this way, for he felt that the preoccupation with technique itself did not produce good music. He had technique to spare, but the attractiveness of his music lies in its direct expression of emotion tempered by restraint. The Three Preludes for Piano exemplify this. Simply stated, these are a medium dance, a song, and a fast dance. No jazz, though—just good Gershwin: the piquant grace notes, the haunting melody, the intricate rhythms.

It was an early critical blunder that Gershwin's compositions were afflicted with the jazz misnomer. It doesn't make much difference today, but when the "fan-critics" took over in the thirties, Gershwin was subjected to a great deal of none too sapient judgment.

Smit and Dot Records have done a service in making these assorted pieces available in a single collection. (Naturally there were omissions, such as Morton Gould's "Blues" from *Interplay*; or the "Blues" from Barber's *Excursions*, but these are later examples and would have been out of keeping with the predominantly twentyish flavor of the set.)

In the half century, roughly, of jazz, the original concept of it as an improvised, uncultivated folk art has completely switched. Today's "progressive", modern, or cool (I must confess a great ignorance of the differences among these) jazz is scored and played from notes by musicians who are not only well trained musically (many having studied with Milhaud, Honegger, Schillinger), but also there seems to be a kind of fraternity feeling, for the present-day so-called jazz musician has a college education to boot. Neither of these advantages cancels out the possibility that said musicians could produce jazz (it has certainly made them frightfully articulate, if not verbose), but we have, indeed, come a long way from St. Louis. —E.J.

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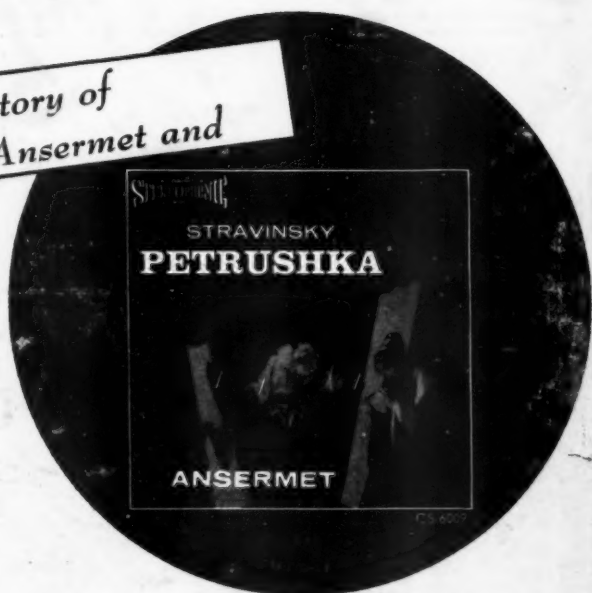
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